

Assessing the impact of a public library's print collection:

a case study of two public libraries in Cape Town

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

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Abstract:

The purpose of these case studies was to explore the impact of a public library's print collection on the community using the library. The motivation for this research is driven by three factors in the South African public library environment. Firstly, the huge investment in library print collections is not currently accounted for in any assessment of library performance, other than expenditure. Secondly, studies of the low levels of literacy and book ownership have established that the public libraries are potentially the only source of reading material for over fifty percent of the population. Thirdly, *The Library and Information Services (LIS) Transformation Charter* calls for more effective and meaningful performance measurement.

The research design for this study was informed by the work of reading theorists. The methodology made use of the GLOs (Generic Learning Outcomes) developed and adopted by the United Kingdom Museums, Libraries and Archives Council as well as research into reading outcomes in public libraries. The study was undertaken within the framework of impact assessment as outlined in the *ISO 16439 – Information and documentation – Methods and procedures for assessing the impact of libraries* and the work of library assessment specialists, Markless and Streatfield.

The research was conducted at two public libraries in two different communities of Cape Town. Questionnaires were distributed to fifty people at each site to collect quantitative data, with follow up interviews conducted with a smaller sample. The focus of the survey and interviews was the leisure reading activities of the participants. The results describe both the patterns of library use and reading behaviour, as well as the impact of using the print collection on the participants.

While the results showed that taste in reading differed, in some respects, between communities, the participants all considered reading an important pastime. The reading experiences described by the participants in this study at the two libraries were similar, as were the benefits gained from leisure reading. This study mirrors the results of studies performed in the United States of America (USA) and the United Kingdom.

Recommendations from this research are that the impact of the public libraries print collection on users, that primarily make use of the collection for leisure reading, is significant and should be documented as an important outcome of a library's performance. Public libraries should focus efforts on providing leisure reading material, despite pressure to focus on literacy, skills development, youth programmes and other activities that are considered to produce more tangible outcomes. In order to uncover factors that make reading an activity of choice, further research needs to be conducted into what differentiates the serious leisure readers from those who do not engage in this pastime.

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I would like to dedicate this to the memory of my father, who passed away in early 2017.

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Abbreviations Used:

IFLA – International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions

ISO – International Standards Organisation

GLO – Generic Learning Outcome

GLOs – Generic Learning Outcomes

SABDC – South African Book Development Council

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Chapter 1 Introduction

The product of an author's investigation into human nature is a story, which is a simulation in two separate senses. First, stories simulate or model the social world through abstraction. This abstraction condenses complex information regarding interactions between multiple autonomous and intentional agents without substantial discarding of key elements, while simultaneously revealing the principal underlying chords of the social world. Second, the abstraction of experience found in stories evokes, through various mechanisms that depend on imagery and literary language, a simulative experience that allows for the compelling and efficient transmission of social knowledge.

The Function of Fiction is the Abstraction and Simulation of Social Experience by Mar and Oatley (2008: 173)

1.1 Introduction

As institutions, public libraries find themselves in a twilight zone between traditional places of learning (such as schools) and social services (supporting people's emotional and material needs). Traditionally, public libraries objectives are described as meeting the education, information, culture, leisure and recreation needs of a community (Beenham & Harrison, 1990: 3). In most cases, public libraries are seen to be addressing an articulated need of a community or individual that fits into those mentioned above. There is a great deal of research that highlights the benefits that public libraries offer in terms of space, social contact and access to information, among others, that are aligned with public libraries' goals. What is lacking is a sound understanding of what role the print collection plays in meeting the goals of the public library service.

Public libraries have, in the past, primarily measured the use of the print collections by the number of books issued. This 'use' is expected to translate into positive benefits for the library users and society in general. While the benefits of reading are well recognised, there is little research linking the books, found in the print collections of public libraries, as a source of positive impact on people's lives. The subject of this research is whether, and how, the users of the non-fiction and fiction public library print collections benefit from this interaction, with a focus on voluntary or leisure reading.

1.2 Background to the study

According to *The public library service: IFLA/UNESCO guidelines for development 2001* (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), 2001: 28) the role of the public library should address the need for lifelong learning, leisure time interests,

information, community activities, cultural activities and recreational reading. At least four of these activities can be directly linked with the library print collection.

In the South African context, public libraries are potentially the only source of reading material for more than half of the population. A survey commissioned by the South African Department of Arts and Culture, undertaken by the South African Book Development Council (SABDC), into the reading habits of South Africans (South African Book Development Council, 2016: 34) found that 51% of households in South Africa own no leisure reading material. Given this situation, there would be an expectation that public libraries would be inundated by members of the public making use of their print collections.

Literacy levels in South Africa are reportedly at 91.9% (Statistics South Africa, 2012). However, when the definition of literacy is interrogated, we find that this figure is hardly representative of the types and levels of literacy required to read for enjoyment, or for lifelong learning. For example, 16% of the population over the age of 15 have not completed Grade 7; 4% cannot write their name and 6% are unable to read in their mother tongue. A further 6% are unable to fill in forms (Statistics South Africa, 2012). Faced with this largely negative state of literacy, the question arises: “What can public libraries do to address this problem and, how do public library’s print collections play a role in reducing these poor reading levels and inspire people to read beyond the immediate necessity of day to day literacy?”

One way that the South African government has attempted to improve this situation is by increasing access to public library services. The provision, since 2007, of an annual conditional grant by National Government to Provincial Governments had, by June 2016, funded the construction of 475 new public libraries, and the upgrading of 299 libraries (South Africa. Department of Arts and Culture, 2014, 2015a, 2016a). The role of public libraries in promoting literacy is highlighted in the *Library and Information Service Transformation Charter* (South Africa. Department of Arts and Culture, 2014: 98), which recommends that public libraries play an active role in fostering a culture of reading. The questions arise: does the provision of these new library services improve people’s lives? In what way does the print collections of these libraries contribute in a positive way to an improvement in people’s lives? Does the simple provision of books make a difference? As stated previously, there is a common consensus that simply providing these books has a

positive effect on the population (Loyland and Ringstad, 2011: 284 & McQuillan and Au, 2001: 228).

The question remains, how to demonstrate the positive effect of the print collection? While academic libraries can use citation rates to track the beneficial use of their collections (International Standards Organisation, 2014: 50), public libraries tend to be dependent on capacity utilisation, which is simply counting the number of books issued. In most cases, the use of print resources within the confines of the library (reference works, or books not taken out but used in the library) tends not to be recorded. The use of a measure, such as citation rates for a public library, would be of no value, as leisure reading and self-study produce no such data.

To overcome the difficulties listed in the previous paragraph, this study focuses on the leisure reading habits of individual library users. The premise that underpins this study is that the participants in the study will be able to identify benefits of leisure reading that correspond with those described by reading theorist Nell (1988) and Krashen (1993), namely positive psychological and cognitive changes. These positive indications can be considered as a form of impact, since impact on individuals is described as including an improved sense of well-being and changes in attitude and behaviour (International Standards Organisation, 2014: 14).

1.3 Research question

The subject of this research is whether, and how, the users of the non-fiction and fiction public library print collections benefit from this interaction, with a focus on voluntary or leisure reading.

This research aims to assess how the use of the print collections translates into a positive impact on the individuals using the public library. The overarching primary question is: does the provision of a print collection in a public library result in measurable benefits for individuals and the community that use the library?

The following sub-questions were formulated to answer the primary research question.

1. What method/s can be used to assess the benefits to users of using the library's print collection?

2. To what extent does the print collection meet the information and leisure reading requirements of the library users?
3. What are the specific criteria that can establish the benefit of the use of a library's print collection?

The research model selected for these cases studies attempts to overcome the problem detailed previously by applying the principles of impact assessment outlined by Poll (2003, 2012), Streatfield (2012) and the International Standards Organisation (ISO) (2014). I do not want to spend too much time on espousing the benefits of impact assessment as a method to illustrate the benefits that public libraries offer to communities, since the approach has already become accepted amongst professionals in the field of library and information science (Poll, 2014).

1.4 Research problem

There has tended to be a focus, by government, on a very limited view of the role that public libraries play within communities in South Africa, as highlighted in a speech by the then deputy minister of Arts and Culture (with oversight of public libraries) (Mabudafhasi, 2014). This view limits the print collection to facilitate a role in improved literacy so indicating that there is a misperception of reading in relation to libraries. While making print resources available to people will inevitably have a positive effect on literacy (Loyland and Ringstad, 2011: 284; McQuillan and Au, 2001), it is the influence that the content of books can have on the literate that has potentially far-reaching effects on the individual, and by extension, the community. It is this potential that this study attempts to uncover, describe and measure. 'Impact' is defined as a difference or change in an individual or group (ISO, 2014: 4), which can be negative, neutral or favourable.

There are many difficulties in pinpointing, with precision, the impact of the use of the library's print collection (Poll, 2012: 127). One can picture the influence that different institutions have on a community almost like ripples in a pond. Radiating and intersecting with each other until the origin becomes lost and the outcome of the original contact, with the specific institution, obscured. In the case of libraries, different service or resources cause varying impact. At the same time, the outcomes of interaction with these services do not differ sufficiently to isolate them and study them individually unless one starts at the source. As one moves beyond the immediate environs of the library, a variety of other

influences within the community will make the library's influence difficult to identify (ISO, 2014: 18).

This research gap raises the question: what benefit do the users of the public library derive from the public library's print collection? The print collection in a typical City of Cape Town public library consists of fiction and non-fiction books for adults and children, in all three of the official languages of the Western Cape – English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa. The size and composition of print collections, in relation to the number of books in each language, varies across the different public libraries in Cape Town according to the demographic, size of the library and linguistic profile of the communities they serve.

1.5 Motivation

With the massive injection of funding by National Government into public libraries, albeit to remedy past neglect, it is becoming imperative that this investment can be demonstrated to have had a positive effect (South Africa. Department of Arts and Culture, 2013, 2014, 2016). Unfortunately, based on the results of the South African Book Development Council's (SABDC) research in 2016, there has been little or no noticeable improvement in literacy or reading habits amongst South Africans since the last study undertaken in 2006 (South African Book Development Council, 2006 & 2016). It would be unrealistic to expect public libraries to have had a national impact. However, we need to understand the localised impact the public libraries may be having on the population using the library.

The recently adopted *Library and Information Service Transformation Charter* (South Africa. Department of Arts and Culture, 2014: 107) recommends improved assessment of public library performance. Proven methods already exist, which can be used to demonstrate the positive impact of providing a public library service. These methods have been published as International Standards Organisation (ISO) Standard 16439/14 (ISO, 2014). However, a gap in assessment methods is still apparent in terms of the use of the print collection within public libraries, especially in terms of impact or benefit. This gap is highlighted by the lack of reference in the ISO 16439/14 to methods for assessing the impact of library print collections.

In the past, there has not been any focus on the single biggest investment that public libraries have made, and (in most cases) continue to make, viz. their print collection. The City of Cape Town libraries' expenditure on the book collections is approximately R9 million

annually from a total capital budget of R50 million (library books are considered assets under the current Generally Recognised Accounting Practice (GRAP 17) guidelines. The print collections, in the 102 public libraries in Cape Town, consist of around 4.5 million books (City of Cape Town Library and Information Service, 2016). In the haste to explore new services such as digital access or programmes aimed at improved social cohesion, the print collection's role appears to have been overlooked. It is hoped that this study will contribute, in a small way, to address this gap by attempting to develop a method that can be used to identify the benefits people gain from using the public library's print collection as well as demonstrate its potential impact.

Surprisingly, at least two studies on public library effectiveness (Glorieux, 2007) make no reference to the library's print collection as a measure of the effectiveness of public libraries. With this in mind, it is now timely to investigate the potential of measuring the benefit of public libraries print collections, and to assess whether these collections have a positive impact on South African communities.

Furthermore, there is an overemphasis in government on the role that public libraries play in developing basic literacy (South Africa. Department of Arts and Culture, 2013, 2014, 2015b, 2016a; Mabudafhasi, 2014) and little evidence of an understanding of the role public libraries play in benefiting those who are literate, and how these levels of literacy can be improved. There is acknowledgment, by government, that a reading nation is a national goal, and of the importance of reading. Methods on how this will be achieved, and what the roles of the public libraries will be, are not revealed.

It is important that the benefits of leisure reading are understood. As Ross (2000a: 13) points out, there is a negative perception of leisure reading as 'time-wasting' or escapism despite research that counters that argument. I hope to show that despite its unguided nature, leisure reading has a positive impact on those who pursue this pastime. Simply put, public library print collections are expected to play a role in improving literacy and other intangible benefits (Henry, 1956). Yet despite the call for methods to evaluate library performance in the *Library and Information Service Transformation Charter* (South Africa. Department of Arts and Culture, 2014: 98), we still seem to regard the print collection as almost an afterthought once the library building is constructed (South Africa. Department of Arts and Culture, 2013: 43). This is in spite of the fact that, in most cases, the print collection

accounts for the second largest portion of the capital expenditure in the establishment of a public library (South Africa. Department of Arts and Culture, 2013).

Elkin and Train (2003: 89) point out that little research has been done on reading for pleasure or reading amongst the adult population, and that most research tends to focus on the development of reading skills rather than the reader's experience. This points to a gap in our understanding of the impact of the print collection and how the users of the library interact with it, especially in the realms of leisure reading, since that is considered to be the primary use of public libraries.

As stated previously, public libraries in South Africa are commonly seen to be playing an important role in improving literacy. This perception was reinforced by the then Deputy Minister of Arts and Culture, Rejoice Mabudafhasi (2014), who stated in a speech that:

Illiteracy is among the national challenges facing our nation, and it is our sector's duty to correct this situation as we instil a culture of reading and writing.... By building library infrastructure, we are merely laying the foundation for a thriving reading culture.

But what is a reading culture? Should we not define the concept in the South African context? And as public libraries are potentially the only source of reading material for more than half of the population, do we not need a better understanding of how people interact with the public library's print collections?

Does the simple provision of books make a difference? As stated previously, there is consensus that simply providing these books has a positive effect on the population (Loyland and Ringstad, 2011: 284). However, this assumption cannot simply be accepted as truth. We need to demonstrate the positive effect.

This study focuses on the leisure reading habits of library users. Leisure reading has an important role to play in the development of literacy skills. Studies undertaken by Nell (1988) demonstrated the benefit of reading for pleasure by recording the positive psychological and cognitive changes that reading for pleasure induced.

An important finding from Nell's research, which may have some influence on collection development, was that "The level of the reading matter and the respective experiential and educational history of the reader does not necessarily dictate the choice of reading matter or the enjoyment" (Nell, 1988:5). Coupled with leisure reading is the concept of free

voluntary reading (FVR) as postulated by Krashen in *The power of reading* (1993). Krashen goes into great detail about the benefits of FVR, highlighting two elements relevant to this study: the importance of the public library as a source of reading material and access to the library.

In summary, there is general consensus that leisure reading benefits individuals by:

- increasing their level of literacy;
- improving their cognitive function;
- improving their emotional state of mind, and;
- uplifting the individual economically, socially and educationally (Nell, 1988; Krashen, 1993; Usherwood and Toyne, 2002; Kirsch et al., 2002).

What remains to be assessed is: does the simple provision of leisure reading material (in the form of print collections) in public libraries have a positive impact on their users?

In the next chapter I will review current literature pertinent to this study and start outlining a theoretical and methodological model.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Literature review

This literature review highlights works that have relevance to the research conducted for this thesis. The review is broken down into the following sections: the first is current developments in public library assessment, in particular the adoption of impact assessment and evidence-based performance assessment among libraries. The second, looks into evidence of the benefits of reading for individuals – specifically leisure or voluntary reading. The third, focuses on the basis for the research methodology applicable to this study. A study of the literature generated the underlying theoretical framework for the study, which, in turn, informed the empirical component.

2.2 Public library assessment

As public entities, public libraries are required to record statistics of use, expenditure, staffing, materials processing and collection size. This input – output based approach was accepted for many years and formed the basis of public library assessment (Closter, 2015). Outputs referred to directly quantifiable factors such as books issued or feet through the door. These quantitative measures were considered acceptable performance measures until well into the 1990s (Closter, 2015: 111). At that point, a shift in assessment towards accessibility and use of resources took place. While the methodology developed for this purpose was not well suited to public libraries, this approach was embraced by academic libraries, as it helped with assessing the use of the library's collection. This is epitomised, for example, by the use of citation rates (Closter, 2015: 113) to demonstrate the value of the library's collection.

The next shift was towards the user experience (Kyrillidou and Cook, 2008) at the beginning of the 2000s with the introduction of LibQual and other user perception surveys. Once again, these methods were more readily adopted by the academic libraries but only slowly started to have an influence on public library assessment as exemplified by studies like those referred to by Usherwood and Toyne (2002). In the last decade, outcomes-based assessments (Closter, 2015: 115) grew in popularity. The outcomes-based approach has many advocates however, is difficult to implement as it requires a parity between the expected outcomes, as defined by the library, and what the user experiences (Closter, 2015: 116). As a result, no outcomes studies in public libraries have been recorded. What readers

experience when reading a book can be considered an outcome in this context, but only if it meets the criteria established by the library.

The historical approach to public library assessment, that focused on reading, is covered in some detail by Karetsky (1982) in the book *Reading research and librarianship: a history and analysis*. In this book Karetsky describes the work of Douglas Waples, who in the late 1920s, focused on research to support decision making for public libraries and to better understand how and why people made use of public libraries (Karetsky, 1982: 93). Research on reading activities in public libraries in the 1930s did not recognise the benefits of leisure reading since the prevailing societal view privileged reading with self-improvement and education as its goal. At this point, there was already a suggestion that the use of the circulation of material as a justification for increasing budgets should be less important than the real-world application of what readers gained from the library collection. The argument was made that quality of the collection, rather than quantity of books being issued, should be used as a measure of success (Karetsky, 1982).

The study by Waples and Carnovsky in 1937 (Karetsky, 1982) focused on accessibility to library collection, largely in order to demonstrate that public libraries were playing a role in self-improvement and upliftment of individuals. These studies still fell short of interrogating what and how books were read. The understanding of how the individual may have interacted with the reading matter was not of concern. It was considered a given that in the perceived role of reading was self-improvement or education that was the role that books in the library played. The preoccupation with what was in the library, rather than why it was chosen to be read, persisted.

The call for methods of assessment that were able to quantify the societal function that libraries play (Debono 2002: 81) was one of the reasons for the adoption of outcome-based assessment. Debono (2002: 81) highlights how researchers were becoming more interested in the user's perceptions of their library experience as these are the reflection of the outcome and impact.

Public library assessment has evolved rapidly in the last few years. This evolution is summarised by Huysmans and Oomes in their paper, *Measuring the public library's societal value: a methodological research program* (2012), where they discuss the move from output-based assessment of public libraries towards assessing the outcomes (impact) of public library services. This trend in the public library sphere towards new standards for

assessment has two basic drivers. The first, according to Poll and Payne in *Impact measures for libraries and information services* (2006: 548), is a need to demonstrate to funders and politicians the benefit of providing a public library service. This was as a result of the general adoption of socio-economic improvement framework by governments and funding agencies worldwide (Closter, 2015: 118), where it became important for all government funded bodies to demonstrate that they were making positive changes in the economic and social fabric of communities. The second is the adoption of evidence-based assessment in the public library field. According to Booth, in his paper, *Counting what counts: performance measurement and evidence-based practice* (2006), this approach relies not just on counting the use of resources or services but assessing the 'improvement' for the individuals who make use of the specific service.

The theoretical basis for impact assessment has developed over time and is not rooted in the Library and Information Science field. Lichfield (1996) describes how impact assessment methods were developed in the community development field as a way of assessing the success of projects, where the end results or long-term benefits may not be directly related to the initial development and may well have been unintended. Impact assessment was developed to support evidence-based planning and has its origin in the Social Sciences (Lichfield 1996).

In the Library and information service field, Streatfield and Markless (2009) and the ISO's Standard 16439/14 (2014) provide the definition of impact, relevant to this study, as a difference or change in an individual that results from intentional or accidental contact with a library service. In much of the literature on this subject the term 'outcomes' is used interchangeably with the term 'impact'. For this study, I will use the term 'impact' when referring to this phenomenon and use the term 'outcome' according to the ISO 16439/14 definition as the:

Direct, pre-defined effect of the output related goals and objectives of the library's planning (e.g. number of users, user satisfaction levels).

The ISO 16439/14 standard was developed to provide a uniform approach to impact assessment, something Poll (2003: 330) alluded to when pointing out that a unified approach for outcome or impact assessment was not, at that point, available. Poll, in her paper, *Can we quantify the library's influence? Creating an ISO standard for impact*

assessment (2012) details the process of drafting the ISO 16439/14 standard. In this paper, Poll (2012: 122) details the challenges in attempting to evaluate the numerous new roles that libraries have had to take on in the last decade. Poll (2012) goes on to describe how the ISO 16439/14 standard will establish the framework and methods for applying impact assessment to the library environment.

It is important at this stage to refer to Streatfield and Markless (2009: 135) to reiterate that this research will not attempt to be a causation study. In other words, this research will not investigate the benefit of the introduction of a new service or resource but will rather review an existing facility (in this case the print collection) and the benefit derived from this resource for members of the public making use of it. As Horwitz (2009: 194) argues, the principles of library performance assessment are to include (amongst others) the need to determine what question one wants answered and what is the most suitable tool to do so.

Poll (2014: 6) reports that currently few impact assessment surveys in public libraries have been undertaken, although she acknowledged that this may change with the publication of the ISO standard for library impact assessment. Few studies have been conducted at individual public library branch level. In South Africa, one was attempted at Harare Public library (Khayelitsha) (Patel, Skarzynski & Nassimbeni, 2015) with other much larger scale studies undertaken in the Netherlands and Norway (Huysmans and Oomes, 2012). Where this study differs from other impact surveys of public libraries, is that only one facility, the print collection, was scrutinised. Impact assessments are typically conducted using surveys (either online or paper-based), interviews and focus groups (Poll, 2014: 7; ISO, 2014: 29). What Poll highlights is the need to 'isolate' the library's role in the change in knowledge or behaviour (2014: 11). This is one of the difficulties faced in public library performance assessment, as many of the potential outcomes of interaction with the public library could well be attributed to other sources.

Impact assessment has, in the past, been primarily used in libraries that serve closed communities of users such as universities or health libraries. According to Bawden et. al. (2009: 64), this is largely due to the difficulty in determining how to identify the 'real change' experienced by the individual using the public library without having some sort of standard to test against. Part of the solution is, according to Bawden et. al. (2009), to define the benefit expected by both the authority responsible for the library and those of the library users. These expected benefits may differ between the actual users and government

institutions. With this in mind, it is important to allow the users of the public library to define the benefit they perceive to be getting from using the library, as intangible as this may be.

The need to take into account the elements mentioned previously is stressed by Elkin, Train and Denham (2003), who repeat the assertion that public libraries need to expand on the methods of performance assessment, going on to say:

We need to engage in “meaningful evaluation” (their parentheses) in order to determine the reading experience of library users beyond simply counting who entered the library “measure the unmeasurable” (Elkin, Train and Denham, 2003: 200)

The publication of the ISO 16439/14 *Methods and procedures for assessing the impact of libraries* in 2014 has created a recognised standard for applying the methods of impact assessment in libraries. This document has not only formalised the method of assessment but provides practical advice for applying the methods.

2.3 Benefits of leisure reading

Leisure reading or reading for enjoyment is defined by Nell as, “Reading for own or self-interest” (1988: 2), while Krashen describes it as “... reading because you want to.” (1993: x). Both are referring to an individual choosing to read a book for no other reason than that they wish to. Reading in this case is a matter of choice. In relation to this study, I have elected to use the term ‘leisure reading’ to describe the act of a member of the public choosing to come to the library and, without any external pressure, choosing to read a book out of interest alone.

The interest in how library users make use of (or benefit from) using books from the collection is not a recent phenomenon. Research carried between 1909-1913 by Dr Hofmann in Germany (Karetsky, 1982) asked users of the public library to write an evaluation of the usefulness of the books they had returned. Unfortunately, the motivation for his study was reflective of class attitudes of the time which led to the idea of separate library catalogues for different classes of library users and material selected based on social class.

There is evidence that the availability of print material increases literacy levels (McQuillan and Au, 2001). However, the wider benefits are somewhat more difficult to articulate.

During the 1930s the development of the psychology of reading by James Wellard and Alice I Bryn resulted in the development of the theory of bibliotherapy (Karetsky, 1982: 222). Bibliotherapy is the use of reading material for therapeutic purposes to treat both physical and mental health cases (Prytherch, 2000: 72). This is the foundation on which much of the apparent psychological benefits of leisure reading is based.

Comber and Cormack (1997) add another dimension to the role of reading, where reading is no longer seen as a solitary undertaking but rather as embedded in the social and cultural reality of the reader. This insight places more emphasis on the role the public library plays in the provision of reading material, as well as the individual's interpretation of what they are reading and the selection thereof.

The shift from the view of reading as a technical activity to be taught and learned at school to a more sociological approach to reading has highlighted the role of different environments (including availability of suitable material) on reading practices and behaviour (Comber and Cormack, 1997: 22). The greater concern with the environments associated with reading, and particularly voluntary reading, whose powerful effects are argued by Krashen (2007), opens useful lines of inquiry into the public library as a print environment. This focus differs significantly from the traditional site of reading research: the classroom. Krashen's voluntary reading theory was developed as a result of his research into the benefits of reading for school children (1993). His research revealed a number of advantages for school children who engaged in voluntary reading, especially in the development of second language ability. While Krashen gathered empirical evidence to support his theory of voluntary reading, Nell's (1988) work focused on the physiological benefits of reading for pleasure, and the cognitive developments that resulted, not limiting his theory to children. Krashen has incorporated Nell's work into his voluntary reading theory (Krashen, 2007).

One of the leaders in researching the consequences of leisure reading (or ludic reading as he termed it) is Victor Nell. In his book, *Lost in a book: the psychology of reading for pleasure* (1988), he maps the positive influence reading has on physiological and cognitive changes in the individual. Nell goes on to say that reading can have an impact on the development of literacy skills. An important finding from Nell's research, which may have some influence on collection development, was that "... the level of the reading matter and the respective experiential and educational history of the reader does not necessarily dictate the choice of reading matter or the enjoyment." (Nell, 1988: 5).

Interchangeable with leisure reading is the term 'free voluntary reading' (FVR) as postulated by Krashen in *The power of reading* (1993). 'Free voluntary reading' is simply the individual choosing to read because they wish to with no outside influence governing their choice of reading matter or the time spent reading. Krashen goes into great detail about the benefits of FVR, highlighting two elements of relevance to this study. The first is the importance of the public library as a source of reading material. The second is the accessibility of the public library. The concept of voluntary reading appears in the works of Krashen (1993: x) and Nell (1988: 2), however, they use different terms to describe the concept. Krashen refers to 'free voluntary reading' while Nell refers to 'ludic' or 'reading for pleasure'. Both authors describe the concept in an almost identical manner. Nell defines it as "Reading for own or self-interest" (1988: 2), while Krashen describes it as "... reading because you want to." (1993: x). Neither author distinguishes between fiction and non-fiction books. As stated earlier, I have adopted the term 'leisure reading' for this research study.

With respect to the recorded benefits of voluntary reading, Krashen's (1993) work showed that children who engaged in voluntary reading displayed improved language skills. While this was not empirically tested by Krashen among adults, anecdotal evidence indicated similar improvements. Krashen (1993: 3) reports improvements in a number of areas: vocabulary, spelling, grammar, writing and oral/aural language ability. Notably, Krashen (1993: 4) found that studies showed that second language ability was markedly improved by voluntary reading in a second language. Krashen's own research (1993: 23) indicated an important correlation between learners having access to books before formal schooling and school performance. His research found that despite increased drill and rote learning exercises at school, those learners without exposure to books and interest in reading never caught up with those who had access to books before formal schooling.

Nell (1988) identified the changes experienced by the individual, as a result of voluntary reading, as conscious and cognitive. Nell (1988: 263) explains: "Physiological changes are seldom perceived by the reader (and are misperceived if they are) ... ". This finding highlights the potential difficulty of assessing the benefit of voluntary reading for the individual. The conscious change occurs when the reader engages with the text, in that they have certain expectations from the book and read with the expectation that those needs will be met (Nell, 1988: 2). Cognitive change (Nell, 1988: 199) is a far more complex product of the reading experience and occurs on multiple levels within the reader's mind.

However, the outcome of voluntary reading, as expressed by Nell (1988: 8) and adapted in the chart that follows (Figure 1), reflects Poll's (2012: 124) model of impact to be used when assessing public library services. This model briefly outlines how a library user interacts with a service provided by the library (in this case the print collection). This interaction is governed by a number of external factors (community, education, book choice and social cultural influences), and internal factors (reading ability, expectations) that will have an influence on what occurs during the use of the public library service or resource. The outcome would be the resulting change experienced by the individual, and that change constitutes the impact of the resource or service on that individual.

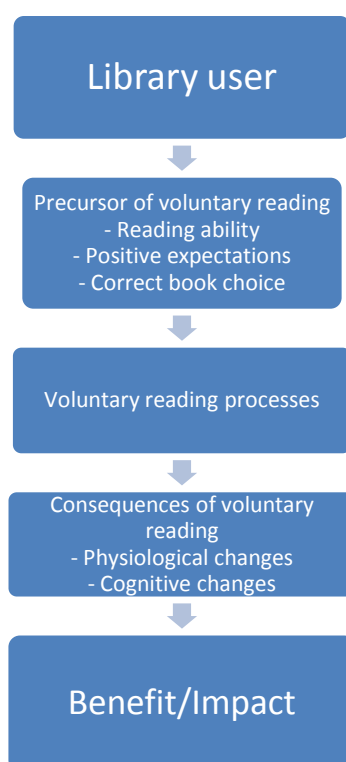


Figure 1: Reader benefit/impact model

This is supported by the work of Mar and Oatley (2008), who have looked into the role fiction plays in creating a 'simulation' of real-world experiences for the reader. Mar and Oatley (2008: 185) say that fiction has the ability to transfer complex social information in a manner that is understandable and relevant to the reader.

In summary, there is consensus that leisure reading (fiction or non-fiction) benefits individuals by:

- increasing their level of literacy;
- improving their cognitive function;

- improving their emotional state of mind;
- uplifting the individual economically, socially and educationally;
- generating ideas and stimulating creativity;
- helping develop critical thinking;
- aiding personal growth;
- helping shape and store recollection of the past;
- providing a better understanding of human nature;
- relieving other experiences;
- providing escapism;
- encouraging independence;
- informing and educating;
- developing sympathy and empathy; and
- communicating of social knowledge.

(Nell, 1988; Krashen, 1993; Usherwood & Toyne, 2002; Kirsch et al., 2002; Elkin, Train & Denham, 2003; Mar & Oatley, 2008).

Ross (2009) points out that readers may very well construct their own meaning from texts, stating that:

In case studies of actual readers, people report that they seize upon whatever speaks directly to their immediate lives, they forget or simply skip over the parts they don't find meaningful, and they sometimes rewrite unsatisfying endings. (2009: 648)

Yet, at the same time, readers report that fiction they have read, or fictional characters, influence their beliefs or world view and may even influence their lives beyond the time spent reading that particular book (Ross 2009: 649). Since readers make their own choices of what to read and use what they read to construct a meaningful framework to view the world, it could be important that public libraries play a more active role in assisting users to choose books. Ross (2009: 632) advocates not supervising or dictating readers' choices but providing cues to the content of books so that those readers, with unconscious information needs, can find what they are looking for. The difficulty in selecting what to read is also mentioned by Mar and Oatley (2008: 185), who write:

It may be difficult for a reader to know whether any particular book will impart useful knowledge or provide a compelling simulative experience before reading it.

As stated previously, for the most part, the assessment of public libraries remained largely in the realms of quantity measures (circulation primarily) though there were some attempts during the 1990s and 2000s to assess how users of the library interacted or benefitted from the reading matter they accessed in the library. The largest of these studies was conducted in the United Kingdom and was reported on by Usherwood and Toyne in 2002. Smaller studies were undertaken in the United States by Ross in 1999 and Moyer in 2007, both focusing on learning from leisure reading, making use of interviews (Ross, 1999: 72) or a mixed approach of questionnaires and interviews (Moyer, 2007: 66). Ross (1999) analysed 194 'open ended' (semi-structured) interviews with people who could be identified as serious readers who read for pleasure. The Ross study was not designed to test the benefits of reading but was attempting to discover how readers made the choice about what to read. An unintended consequence was that many of the participants reported on their reading experiences in terms of what they had learned. The study highlighted the fact that people often select books based on an unconscious need.

The study Moyer (2007) reported on was also focused initially on book selection and information needs. The study was undertaken in two public libraries where the users were asked to complete a questionnaire detailing genre preference and questions on the reading experience in terms of relaxation and learning. The intention was to assess the outcome of the reading experience and whether that outcome was relevant to the initial 'need' of the participant. The study concluded that the interaction with books was dependent on the individual and that learning, or insight, was often unrelated to the initial need (Moyer, 2007).

Another theme was that learning while reading fiction was much easier and more fun than traditional types of learning (Moyer, 2007: 73). While there is still some hesitation in recognising that learning takes place while reading for pleasure, the idea is supported by the National Literacy Trust in their *Reading for pleasure* report (2006: 8), which listed the following benefits of reading:

- *General knowledge (e.g. Cunningham and Stanovich, 1998);*
- *A better understanding of other cultures (Meek, 1991);*
- *Community participation (e.g. Bus, van Ijzendoorn and Pellegrini, 1995); and*
- *A greater insight into human nature and decision-making (Bruner, 1996).*

(National Literacy Trust references)

According to the Research Centre for Museums and Galleries (RCMG) report, compiled by Hooper-Greenhill et. al. (2003: 6), an individual's experiences of learning, in relation to libraries, are diverse and "... they may include increased knowledge and understanding, development of new skills and abilities or inspiration to learn more." In addition, Hooper-Greenhill et. al. (2003: 6) go on to say that people often use libraries to "... reinforce knowledge that they already have."

A number of researchers have tested Krashen's research over the years, finding evidence to support its conclusions (Kirsch et. al., 2002; Usherwood & Toyne, 2002; Mar & Oatley, 2008). Voluntary reading has become an accepted part of the educational approach in some countries (Krashen, 2007) with the public library playing a key role in its promotion. This supports the premise that learning, emotional development, development of social skills and numerous other benefits to the individual occur during the act of reading for pleasure. In chapter 4, the results from this study will be interrogated to establish if they support these findings.

2.4 Methodology for assessing impact

Streatfield and Markless (2009: 137) have the following advice for those developing an impact assessment study:

- Define the impact objective of the resource under review;
- Determine the indicator/s of impact that can be used to signify change in the individual behaviour; and
- Outline evidence that should be gathered, and how should this be used, in order to demonstrate the impact.

They go on to advise that the impact evidence is most often qualitative in nature and that it can be assessed only through "... rigorous application of Social Science research methods based on observation, asking questions and inferring change from review of the products of people's activity." (2009: 137).

For a more practical description of impact assessment, the ISO 16439/14 *Methods and procedures for assessing the impact of libraries* (2014: 21-60) is useful. It covers in detail the methods that can be applied to assessing library impact. These are summarised below:

- Inferred evidence – based on statistical data;
- Solicited evidence – surveys, interviews and focus groups;
- Observed evidence – observation of behaviour;
- Combined methods – combination of any of the above, and;
- Quantitative and qualitative data – produced using the methods listed above.

Elkin, Train and Denham (2003: 204) caution that the validity of qualitative data collection in a research study with a small sample and a narrow focus can be questioned on the following grounds:

1. The limited reach, can the comments of a few individuals be attributed to the community as a whole? (Generalization) 2. While comments can embody powerful, detailed and emotive response can we view these responses as evidence? (cherry picking and unstructured response) (Elkin, Train and Denham, 2003: 204).

While the focus of this research is only one element of a public library service, the methods described by Poll (2003), Markless and Streatfield (2009), and detailed in ISO 16439/14 (2014), are applicable. In a typical impact assessment, the use of a library's services is assessed and the benefits of using these services quantified (Poll, 2003: 329). In this case, the focus is on one particular service provided by the public library, viz. the print collection, so necessitating the use of accepted methods to identify the benefits flowing from use of the library's print collection. If this were a causation study, one could look at testing individuals from the community before the availability of the print collection and retesting after (Streatfield and Markless, 2009: 135). In this case, and with most other investigations of library impact or performance, the service has been available to the community for some time. This conundrum is mentioned by Poll (2003) where the problem with detecting outcome of library interaction is discussed. Poll (2003) states that when one is not able to use the causation approach one becomes dependent on the public using the service to identify the changes that they experience within themselves.

While exploring other studies relating to the reading experience and public libraries, three studies stand out as applicable to this research, namely Ross (2000) and Moyer (2007), both mentioned earlier, and Bray (2007) in his paper *Libraries inspire learning: opening up the reading experience*. What makes the Bray study particularly relevant is the use of the GLOs (Generic learning outcomes), a set of learning outcomes that can be ascribed to an individual's contact with a museum, gallery or library (The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council: 2008). These outcomes are:

- Increase in knowledge and understanding;
- Increase in skills;
- Change in attitudes or values;
- Evidence in knowledge;
- Evidence of enjoyment, inspiration and creativity; and
- Evidence of activity, behaviour, progression.

(United Kingdom. Museums, Libraries and Archives Council 2008)

The use of the GLOs as a method of assessing learning is based on the theory that:

Learning outcomes provide a mechanism where learning can be categorised in a number of ways, some practical, e.g. skills, others theoretical, e.g. attitudes. (Amosford, 2007: 129)

The GLOs were extensively evaluated and used in the United Kingdom mostly to advocate for museums, libraries and galleries (Graham, 2013). In her report, Graham goes further in describing the outcomes of these learning experiences as drivers of further learning:

They may include increased knowledge and understanding, development of new skills and abilities or inspiration to learn more. Often, learners use museums, archives and libraries to reinforce knowledge that they already have. Learning can also be short-term and long-term. A learner might not use their new knowledge or ability until a long time after the actual learning event. (Graham, 2013: 6)

Graham's report gives an assessment and overview of the application of the GLOs. Some of the points Graham raises to explain why the GLOs are so appropriate:

- Libraries are not positioned to dictate the learning outcomes for their users;
- Libraries are not able to 'test' their users in the traditional sense to determine if their knowledge has increased;
- Library users can make their own judgements relating to what they need or want to know; and
- Emotions and learning are intertwined "Enjoyment, amazement or inspiration can provide the motivation to acquire facts and knowledge" (Graham, 2013: 7).

While the GLOs have gained acceptance, there are still some questions as to the validity of this taxonomy of learning (Brown, 2007). Bawden et. al. (2009) defend the GLOs by stating that Bloom's taxonomy of effective learning outcomes can be associated with the emotional understanding derived or experienced from reading fiction. Bawden et. al. (2009: 77) go on

to say that the entire reader's experience is far more complex than at first assumed. Bawden (2009) reported that readers engaged with the books on a much deeper level of analysis than anticipated, critically reviewing the content and its relevance to them and others.

Several methods are suggested as appropriate for assessing impact by the ISO 16439/4 standard. Two methods to obtain solicited evidence are surveys and interviews (ISO 16439/14, 2014: 29). The ISO 16439/4 cautions that:

- surveys should be pre-tested;
- questions should be short and clearly structured;
- strictly anonymous;
- handed out in person (when paper-based);
- attempt to achieve a high response rate; and
- consist of open and closed questions.

(ISO 16439/14, 2014: 29)

While a number of possible questions relating to academic performance are suggested by the ISO 16439/14 standards, the primary questions for public libraries tend to be directed towards satisfaction (ISO 16439/14, 2014: 28). Interviews are suggested with the stipulation that informed consent be requested and the right for interviewees to withdraw is made clear. Interviews should at all times be conducted within ethical guidelines (ISO 16439/14, 2014: 39). The type of impact being investigated will determine the nature of the questions asked. In the case of economic impact or satisfaction, the nature of the questions would be designed to solicit data relevant to that type of impact (ISO 16439/14, 2014; Streatfield and Markless, 2009).

The preceding paragraphs cover the theoretical approach of impact assessment, as applying the methods used in previous studies of a similar nature, the following needed to be considered. The study undertaken in Devon public libraries, in the United Kingdom, used a questionnaire that was placed inside individual books and completed by library users, once they had completed reading that particular book (Bray, 2007). Since the questionnaires were placed in books, the questions could, while generic in nature, be interpreted to refer to that particular book and specific learning outcomes. The Devon questionnaire consisted of nine questions that could be directly linked to relevant GLOs (Bray, 2007). The research

conducted by Moyer (2007) was primarily focused on reader advisory services and was targeted at fiction readers. Moyer wanted to explore the learning outcomes of fiction reading over and above the already-recognised role of fiction reading as a leisure activity (Moyer, 2007). Moyer developed a questionnaire that consisted of fourteen questions that queried both the leisure role of fiction reading and learning outcomes. Other aspects where Moyer's questionnaire differed from the Devon questionnaire was that it was not designed to be placed into a book, and as a result, questions were designed to relate not to broader reading behaviour but rather only to fiction reading. Most of the questions were similar to the ones found in the Devon survey (Moyer, 2007; Bray, 2007). However, Moyer differed in that the questions directly interrogated if any learning had taken place and whether the fiction related to the reader's real life. (Moyer 2007).

In Summary, there is fairly detailed literature describing the evolution of public library assessment. From a past that focused primarily on inputs and outputs to current methods that are concerned with the impact and the outcome of individuals interactions with the libraries services. In contrast, there have been few empirical studies into the benefits of leisure reading, however those that have been recorded are unequivocal in detailing the benefits of leisure reading. The methodology of impact assessment is well documented by Markless and Streatfield (2009), Poll (2003) and in the ISO 16439/14 *Methods and procedures for assessing the impact of libraries* (2014). This is supported in practice by studies reported on by Moyer (2007) and Bray (2007). In the next chapter the details of the research design, methods and data collection are detailed.

Chapter 3 Research Design, Research Methods and Data Collection

3.1 Theoretical framework

The term 'research design' is used to describe how the various elements of a study are aligned in order to address the research problem. In this case, the underlying research question is: What benefits do the users of a public library derive from the public library's print collection? Based on the nature of the question and its location in the public library, choices had to be made about the appropriate approach to addressing the research question. Informing these decisions must be the fundamental framework that the researcher has adopted for the study. In the paragraphs that follow, I will detail the theoretical framework that motivated the choice of research methods, followed by section 3.2 research methods and section 3.3 research design.

Based on the work of Markless and Streatfield the *ISO 16439/14 Standard for impact assessment in libraries* and the practical studies undertaken by Ross (2000), Moyer (2007) and Bray (2007) it was decided that a mixed methods approach using a questionnaire with a selection of follow-up interviews would yield the required data. The mixed method is a recognised approach to social science research (Maree, 2016), capable of providing quantitative data through the use of questionnaires and qualitative data (or insights) from interviews that support and extend the findings from the questionnaire.

The benefit of this approach is the opportunity it offers to assess the reliability and validity of the quantitative data through comparison with the qualitative data, allowing for triangulation to test for reliability and validity (Maree, 2016). All data will be collected and analysed using methods outlined in the *ISO 16439/14 – Information and documentation – Methods and procedures for assessing the impact of libraries 2014*. These methods, outlined in the ISO 16439/14, include the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods, the application of ethical research and to define the role of the library in the particular outcomes that are measured.

This is only relevant if it fits with the theoretical framework within which the research is located. This research is grounded in two theories: the first is the theory of reading as a socially and culturally constructed activity (Comber & Cormack, 1997: 22) and that it takes place as a 'literacy event' defined by Heath as a "... occasion in which a piece of writing is

integral to the participants' interactions and their interpretive processes." (1987: 93). The second is the theory of impact (Streatfield and Markless, 2009; Poll, 2012).

Since the type and range of changes in the individual are subtle and largely internalised, the research methods had to involve direct feedback from the individual. In order to assess the direct impact of voluntary reading (as a result of making use of a public library's print collection), the identification of change in the individual was needed. Based on the research referred to in Chapter 2, GLOs were used to identify the beneficial outcomes of voluntary reading (United Kingdom. Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, 2008).

In order to develop the framework for this research, the following assumptions were used as a foundation:

1. The environment in which a literacy event takes place has social and cultural dimensions.
2. Public libraries in South Africa are a print-rich environment offering opportunities for reading. Public libraries are the only source of leisure reading books for 51% of South Africa's population. (South African Book Development Council, 2016)
3. Voluntary reading can result in physiological and cognitive changes in the individual, which can be considered 'impact'.
4. These changes can be identified by the reader and align with specific GLOs.

It is important to note that this research does not investigate the introduction of a new element into the community. It was not possible to measure the change in individuals as a result of the introduction of print collections, in other words, through testing and re-testing.

3.2 Research methods

I elected to use a paper-based questionnaire and convenience sampling at two sites (public libraries A and B). The choice of a paper-based questionnaire was made to make sure that users of the library who read books were reached rather than potentially limiting the study to those who interact with the library on digital platforms. The paper-based questionnaire can be completed quickly and, as the sample size was relatively small, the data could be captured within the time frames of the study. For the most part, members of the public are comfortable completing a paper-based questionnaire but are hesitant to be interviewed (Dawson, 2006). Convenience sampling was selected as it would take place within the public

libraries selected, where the population chosen for this study would be found. While I am aware of the disadvantages of convenience sampling, for example, the potential bias and lack of stratification within the sample (Dawson, 2006: 51), this risk was mitigated by the relative homogeneity of the sample, in other words adult library users. The nature of the study did not lend itself to other probability sampling or other purposive forms of sampling, such as snowball sampling, as time and resources did not allow for this.

The population consisted of adult members of the public using the library during the week (Monday to Friday). The sample was fifty individuals, from each site, who were willing to participate. The number of participants was chosen to keep the results manageable and still yield a large enough sample permitting conclusions to be drawn. No other criteria were applied to the selection of the sample. The follow-up interviews were drawn from this same sample.

GLO	Outcome
Knowledge and understanding	
Making links and relationships between things	That is, certain behavior is the result of upbringing
Attitudes and values	
Feelings and perceptions	Emotions that resulted from reading
Opinions about ourselves	Improved self-esteem
Attitudes towards others	Positive perception of others
Empathy	Improved tolerance towards others
Reasons for action or personal viewpoints	Change in perception to why something was/should be done
Skills	
Emotional skills	Recognising the feelings of others and allowing these feelings to be expressed
Communication skills	Improved writing, speaking and listening skills/abilities
Key skills (literacy)	Improved literacy
Enjoyment, inspiration and creativity	
Having fun	Enjoying reading
Being surprised	Reading something that surprises the reader
Innovative thoughts, actions or things	Reading results in new understanding
Being inspired	Reading results in inspiration

Table 1: Selected Generic Learning Outcomes (United Kingdom Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (2008))

A short questionnaire was developed with questions directly linked to the GLOs as developed by the United Kingdom's Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (2008) listed in Table 1. The GLOs all relate to a change or improvement in an individual as a result of his/her interaction with a museum, library or archive. (See Section 2.4 in Chapter 2)

Completed questionnaires were captured on MoonStats 2 software so rendering these results anonymous. The interviews were transcribed and at no point was the identity of the interviewees and contents of the interviews related. Demographic data collected was limited to the age of the participants.

The methodology relied on individuals being able to identify the benefits of reading books from the public library for themselves. Thus, the research required identifying indicators of impact that the individuals themselves were able to report on.

In order to assess the direct impact of voluntary reading (as a result of making use of a public library's print collection), the identification of change in the individual was formulated. The GLOs were selected as those most appropriate to this research and those with which the participants would be able to identify.

The assumption, made for this study, is that if one can record one form of benefit from leisure reading, in this case learning, has taken place it is possible to assume the other positive outcomes of leisure reading, of both fiction and non-fiction, identified by Nell (1988) and Graham (2003) are present. These psychological, emotional and cognitive changes are more difficult to identify. While learning is not the only positive outcome of leisure reading it is one that can be observed and recorded as a change in an individual.

3.3 Research design

Two public libraries in Cape Town were selected as sites for this research based on the comparable size of their print collections and the number of members using the library, thereby allowing for comparison of results. One library is located in a former township, where the population may have English as a second language only, and where unemployment and economic uncertainty are more prevalent (Library A). The other library is located in a community that is predominantly English-speaking, where the majority of the adult population is employed or retired (Library B).

Library A has a collection of approximately 50 900 items and circulates about 130 000 items annually. Library B's collection numbers 61 105 items while the circulation figure is 110 000

(all statistics from City of Cape Town Library and Information Service). Unfortunately, it was impossible to get an accurate count of the number of people visiting the branches annually as this data has proven to be inaccurate and is often not recorded consistently or correctly. The selection of the two libraries serving differing communities was done in an attempt to assess the influence of different communities on the reading behaviour of the people using the library.

Library A, located near a taxi rank, is within walking distance of a large number of potential users. Library B is situated within a suburban setting far from public transport interchanges and is predominantly reached via car by its users, many of whom live beyond walking distance to the library.

In order to design an effective, valid and reliable survey instrument, certain key factors were considered in the design of the questionnaire used at the two libraries selected as survey sites. The design of the questionnaire had to take into account the following questions: What data would need to be collected? How would this data contribute to the overall goal of this research?

According to Maree (2016: 177), it is important to consider the following when crafting the questionnaire: clear concise instructions and a neat clear design will facilitate more accurate response by the participants. The questionnaire should not be too long, and the questions should follow in a logical order. Wording of questions should avoid ambiguity. The clarity of the questions will enhance the reliability of the questionnaire (Babbie, 2016: 147).

In Chapter 2, I detailed the approaches used by Moyer (2007) and Bray (2007), which informed the development of my questionnaire. The rationale followed was to develop a relatively short questionnaire with questions that could be directly linked to the GLOs as developed by the United Kingdom's Libraries and Archives Council (2008). This principle has been applied in the past in research undertaken in Devon and described by Amosford (2006), Bray (2007) and Bawden et. al. (2009). A similar approach was used by Moyer as outlined in the paper *Learning from leisure reading* (Moyer 2007) which describes a study in which American public library users were surveyed regarding learning outcomes from reading fiction.

Table 2 shows how specific questions linked to a particular GLO were generated for the questionnaire, with the addition of a Sixth outcome, based on a study in the United States of

America by Moyer who investigated learning through leisure reading (2007). The questions drafted reflect the recognition that reading is not merely an individual pursuit, but a social practice (Comber & Cormack, 1997; Barton, Hamilton and Ivanič, 2000: 7). The final question sought to profile respondents with respect to the amount they read, in order to assess both the amount read and how this was related to the benefits of reading. Included in the questionnaire was an explanation of leisure reading to assist the participants in identifying that type of reading behaviour.

I followed a similar approach to that of the Bray (2007) study and have directly aligned specific questions to the relevant GLO (See Table 2). Unlike the Devon questionnaire (Bray, 2007), I have phrased mine to be more general in nature, without referring to a specific book. I increased the number of questions to eleven adding extra questions relating to **knowledge and understanding** and **skills** GLOs.

<p>(GLO) Knowledge and understanding</p> <p>Q. Reading has helped me understand why some people behave in a certain way.</p> <p>Q. I think that reading has allowed me to better understand historical events.</p> <p>(GLO) Attitudes and values</p> <p>Q. Reading has given me a better understanding of people who are different from me (follow a different religion, culture or race).</p> <p>Q. Reading has helped me deal with my emotions and feelings.</p> <p>(GLO) Skills</p> <p>Q. Reading has improved my communication skills with other people (writing, speaking and listening).</p> <p>Q. Reading has helped me to better understand what other people are feeling.</p> <p>(GLO) Enjoyment, inspiration and creativity</p> <p>Q. I find reading an enjoyable part of your life.</p> <p>Q. Reading has inspired me to try something new.</p> <p>(GLO) Action, behavior and progression</p> <p>Q. Reading has made me change the way I do something in daily life.</p> <p>Q. Reading has helped me understand problems and solve them.</p>
--

Table 2: List of questions linked to respective GLOs

To gather information about a GLO relating to **skills**, a question was asked relating to improved communication skills as identified by Krashen (1993) as a skill developed through leisure reading. An additional skill identified is that of empathy. The **knowledge and understanding** GLO was assessed against questions querying knowledge about the world, historical events and people's behaviour. An outcome consistent with the development of **attitudes and values** GLO is manifested when the reader has developed a better

understanding of others as well as the ability to deal with emotions and feelings. The questions on the GLOs relating to **enjoyment, inspiration and creativity** query if reading is an enjoyable pastime and whether reading has inspired them to try something new. The questions relating to the **action, behaviour and progression** GLO asks if reading has resulted in a change in the way something was done in daily life and whether reading has helped them understand and solve problems.

All but one of the questions in Table 2 were given in a tabular format requiring the participants to indicate if they Agree, do not know or disagree with the statement.

I borrowed two statements from Moyer's (2007) research (see Table 3 below). Since both questions refer to the recognition of learning. I felt that it would be relevant to include them in my questionnaire.

Awareness of learning

Q. Reading has taught me very little.

Q. Nothing I read relates to my life.

Table 3: Awareness of learning (Moyer, 2007: 70)

I included a question to assess the recognition of learning. This question queried if the reader discusses the books they read with others. This is an important way to discern if the reader is fully aware and able to articulate what they may have learnt from reading books. It also reflects the fact that reading is a social practice (Barton and Hamilton, 2000: 7). Since I have no other way to assess the retention of the learning that took place, I think this question is an important addition (see Table 4 below).

Assessing Learning

Q. I discuss the books I read with other people?

Table 4: Assessing learning

A question querying the number of books read by participants was included as a method of assessing the level of potential impact (see Table 5).

How Many Books do you read in a month?

Table 5: Number of books read

The question above can be related to the the ratio of books the participant borrows from the public library. This question helps to assess the impact of the public library as a source of reading material (see Table 6 below).

Please tick the statement that applies to you:

The public library provides me with:

All the books I read ☐

More than half the books I read ☐

Fewer than half the books I read ☐

Table 6: Source of books read

A table listing recognised genres and subjects that are included in City of Cape Town public library collections, asking for feedback on preferences, was included in the questionnaire (see Table 7 below). This was in an attempt to find out if the nature of the books read had any influence on the type or degree of learning experienced by the participants.

	Love	OK	Do not read
Romance	Love	OK	Do not read
Religious fiction	Love	OK	Do not read
Historical fiction	Love	OK	Do not read
Crime fiction	Love	OK	Do not read
Thriller/Action fiction	Love	OK	Do not read
Fantasy fiction	Love	OK	Do not read
Science fiction	Love	OK	Do not read
Biographies or Autobiographies	Love	OK	Do not read
Health (non-fiction)	Love	OK	Do not read
DIY or Home and Garden (non-fiction)	Love	OK	Do not read
Inspirational/Self-help (non-fiction)	Love	OK	Do not read
Other books such as:	Love	OK	Do not read

Table 7: Genres

Queries relating to demographics were excluded as they are not relevant to the study and would have increased the length of the questionnaire. Included at the start of the questionnaire was an explanation (in bold) of the concept of leisure reading: “**Leisure reading is the type of reading that a person does for no other reason than they want to. It is a voluntary activity and not required for study or school and can be fiction (novels) or non-fiction.**” This was repeated at the end of the survey to reinforce the importance of the

category of reading being investigated. The preamble to this explained who I am, the purpose and nature of the research, the funding source, the supervisor's details and ethical considerations.

3.4 Pilot test

The questionnaire was pilot tested with ten participants, at a different library to those used as research sites. No fundamental flaws were found. At least one participant failed to turn over the questionnaire to complete the questions on the reverse side. This did lead to the addition of a 'please turn over...' statement at the bottom of the first page of the questionnaire.

The final version of the questionnaire was submitted to the UCT Ethics Committee for approval, which was granted. The final version of the questionnaire is included in Appendix 1.

3.5 Data collection

Two public libraries in Cape Town were selected as sites for this research based on the comparable size of their print collections and the number of members using the library, thereby allowing for comparison of results. One library is located in a former township, where the population may have English only as a second language and where unemployment and economic uncertainty are more prevalent (Library A). The other library is located in a community that is predominantly English-speaking, where the majority of the adult population is employed or retired (Library B).

Convenience sampling was used, and questionnaires were handed out to willing adult participants at both sites over a period of two weeks. In total, fifty completed questionnaires from Library A and fifty-one from Library B were collected during the month of May, 2016.

3.6 Data analysis

Once the questionnaires had been collected, the data was entered into MoonStats 2 software in order to allow for analysis and comparison. The data was collated from the research sites individually and studied on a site-specific manner so that the results from each site could be analysed in isolation of each other. The breakdown of these results is reported in the next chapter.

3.7 Interviews

For the interviews, a schedule of questions was drawn up and submitted, along with the questionnaire, for ethical clearance, which was granted (see Appendix 2). The interviewees were drawn from people who completed the questionnaires.

The intention was to use a semi-structured interview, so that while pertinent responses to elements of the study could be gleaned, the interviewees would feel able to volunteer other information, affording the interviewer an opportunity to find out potentially relevant information that may not have been anticipated.

The interview questions were asked in the following sequence, with the reason for their inclusion included after each question listed:

1. Could you please tell me a bit about yourself?

- The aim of this question was to gather some background information about the participant and to put them at ease. This was an opportunity to determine their level of education, place of residence, employment status, etc.

2. You have agreed to an interview because you have an interest in reading. Can you tell me what reading means to you?

- This question was to determine the participants perception of reading. This was intended to give the interviewer some context with regard to the interviewee's viewpoint on reading. This could also lead to understanding the social cultural influences on the reading behaviour.

3. About how much of your time do you spend reading?

- The intention of this question was to find out the reading engagement of the participant. This would help to discover whether they were committed readers or not.

4. If you did not read what would you do in that time?

- This was to assess the 'opportunity' cost of reading. Would they sacrifice another activity in order to read, or is this 'reading time' set aside expressly for this pastime.

5. Can you describe your reading interests? That is, what types of books do you enjoy reading most?
 - This question was intended to encourage the participants to talk about genre and whether the preferred fiction or non-fiction, and why. This was to determine what kind of reading they engaged in (for enjoyment, pleasure or in search of information) and why.
6. How do you choose the books you read?
 - A recognised part of typical learning typologies is the recognition of a gap in knowledge. This question would help uncover whether the participants had identified a knowledge gap and select books based on this. In addition, this question elicits information about the criteria respondents use in their choice of books.
7. Could you tell me about a recent book you read?
 - This question could lead to unstructured follow up questions that would allow for expansion on what was read thus allowing the interviewer to understand whether and what learning took place. This could lead to the exploration of whether some of the other listed benefits of reading were experienced.
8. Can you think of a time when something you read in a book had an impact on how you reacted to a situation you experienced? Can you tell me about it?
 - This question could possibly uncover an instance where change in behaviour occurred as a result of reading something in a book. This is one of the GLOs. The logic behind this question was to confirm whether individuals are able to recall, and give credit to, something they had read.
9. Can you think of any book you have read, long ago, that still has some influence on you today? And how long ago did you read it?
 - This question was to query if possible long-term retention of information had occurred. The question responded to a criticism that most studies were done directly after the interaction with the library or museum.
10. Do you do any of your own writing? Is it influenced by what you read?
 - This question could possibly indicate retention, recording and use of information gained through reading. This question could also be used to infer a relationship

between reading and writing, a nexus many theorists espouse. It would pose any relevance to social cultural construct around literacy.

The interviews were conducted at the research sites at a time convenient for the interviewees. The interviewees completed informed consent forms (see Appendix 3) and the interviews were recorded with their consent. The interviews were then transcribed from the audio recordings.

The transcribed interviews were studied to determine if any responses to the questions were similar to or met criteria that could be interpreted as indicating potential impact, as defined by the ISO Standard 16439/14 (2014). The comments from the interviews were also used to provide anecdotal support for some of the conclusions drawn from the questionnaires.

3.8 Limitations and challenges of the study

Maree (2007: 42) points out the importance of mentioning the limitations and challenges faced as these could have an impact on the results of the research. The study was limited to two research sites due to geographic, time limitations and financial constraints. This was further hampered when one of the sites was closed for an extended period of time due to storm damage. While the intention was to use subjects, who visited the library at similar times of the day the, usage patterns and opening hours of the libraries precluded that. Logistical constraints dictated the number of participants that could be accommodated.

Every effort was made to get a representative sample of library users who make use of the library print collection. While a number of the participants in the paper-based questionnaire portion of the research indicated a willingness to be interviewed, when actually approached to take part, they unfortunately declined to participate. This resulted in only four interviews being conducted at one of the sites (Library A) and a gender-biased sample at both sites for the interviews. Only men at Library A and women at Library B. The interviews had to be conducted in English as was done with the paper-based questionnaires.

3.9 Delimiters of the study

By its very nature any form of research will be compromised by certain delimiters that could influence the results (Maree, 2007: 42). It is important to be aware of these delimiters as these should be kept in mind when reviewing the results.

The first factor that stands out is that the sample is not representative of the broader population. However, it is possible to relate this sample to the broader population by how it compares to the South African Book Development Council's (2006 and 2016) findings. In discussing the research findings, this is taken into account and no generalisations are made. Since the subject of this research is the interaction with the print collection, the sample selected could be considered adequate.

One of the other concerns is the ability of the methodology to isolate the influence of the print collection of the library as the source of the positive change experienced by the participants. By selecting the sample from within the library and inquiring how many books are sourced from the library collection, the influence of the collection should be discernible.

3.10 Ethical considerations

As stated earlier, the need for an ethical approach to impact assessment research (ISO 16439/14, 2014: 39) is integral to the approach used in the study. Since this research was undertaken in a public space with members of the public, it was important that the responses are treated confidentially and that at all times the participants understand the nature of the research being undertaken so that they can participate from a position of informed consent (see Appendices 2 and 3).

In addition, ethical clearance had to be obtained from the University of Cape Town's Ethics Committee before the research could commence. All the results from questionnaires and interviews were rendered anonymous once captured or transcribed and the originals stored securely until it is appropriate for them to be destroyed.

In summary the research design was primarily dictated by the research question. The resulting research instruments, namely questionnaires and interviews, were based on previous research of a similar nature and accepted methodology suitable for this type of research. The limitations and delimitations of the study were recognised and noted. An ethical social science research approach was taken. In next chapter I describe the findings from this study.

Chapter 4 Findings

In this section I have chosen to work through the questions in the order in which they appear in the questionnaire in so as to provide a logical progression of the findings. This is followed by a section on comparative analysis, where the responses to two or more questions from the same library are compared to determine whether a relationship can be found between the factors as they are reflected in the responses (Creswell, 2011: 215). Interview data is used to expand on the questionnaire responses or to provide a comparative perspective. The interview results are covered in more detail in an independent section 4.7. Interview results.

Just as a reminder, Library A is located in a former township, where the population may have English only as a second language and where unemployment and economic uncertainty are more commonplace, while Library B is located in a community that is predominantly English-speaking, where the majority of the adult population is employed or retired.

4.1 Questionnaire results

The following section is broken down by the questions as they appeared on the questionnaire. Each heading reflects the actual question. Tables or graphs are used to illustrate the data.

4.1.1 I find reading an enjoyable part of my life

The first question asked if the participants found reading an enjoyable part of their lives. Library A indicated 100% agreement with this statement while Library B had one participant who disagreed with this statement, giving a 98% positive response rate. This question is the first to test a GLO as it refers to testing the outcome **Enjoyment, inspiration and creativity**.

4.1.2 On average how many books do you read in a month?

The next question asked how many books were read on average during one month. The number of books read in an average month as reported by the respondents from the two libraries was very similar but with a slightly higher incidence of fewer books being read per month by the users of Library B. The average for Library A is 6.48 books/month while Library B is 6.15 books/month. The graph in Figure 2 shows a breakdown of all the responses. Using

the most recent survey of people's reading habits in the USA, the average intensity of reading by the participants from both libraries can be classified as heavy:

Roughly three in 10 are light readers (one to five books in the past 12 months); another 25% to 31% are moderate readers (six to 20) and just about two in 10 are heavy readers (21 or more books) in the past 12 months (Miller, Purcell and Rainie, 2012).

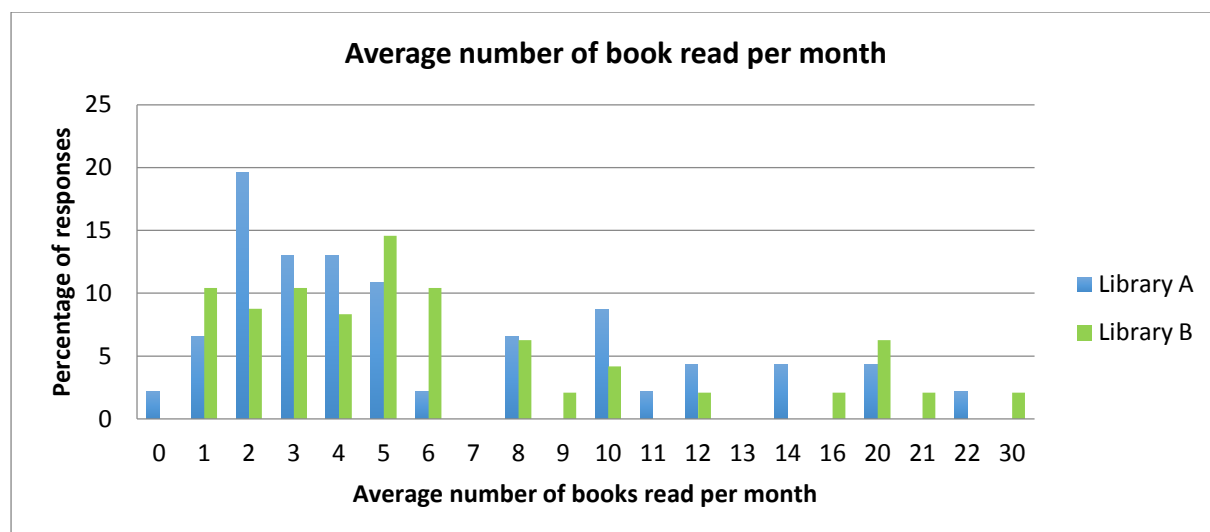


Figure 2: Average number of books read per month N=50 for each library

The intensity of reading, presented in Figure 2, cannot be taken as representative of all library users as a trend towards declining circulation within public libraries, in the Western Cape, shows that many users may not make be making use of the print collection (Cultural Affairs and Sport, 2017: 6). It is heartening, though, to see that reading for those who took part in the survey ranks so highly as an activity.

4.1.3 What year were you born in?

Question three of the questionnaire asked for the age of the participants. This was the only demographic data collected. The distribution of the age of the participants shows a relatively similar pattern at both libraries (see Figure 3). There are, however, some variations at the extreme ends of the age spectrum. The sample of participants from Library B included more older people while Library A had more younger people taking part. This is consistent with the demographics of the two communities (City of Cape Town, Census 2011).

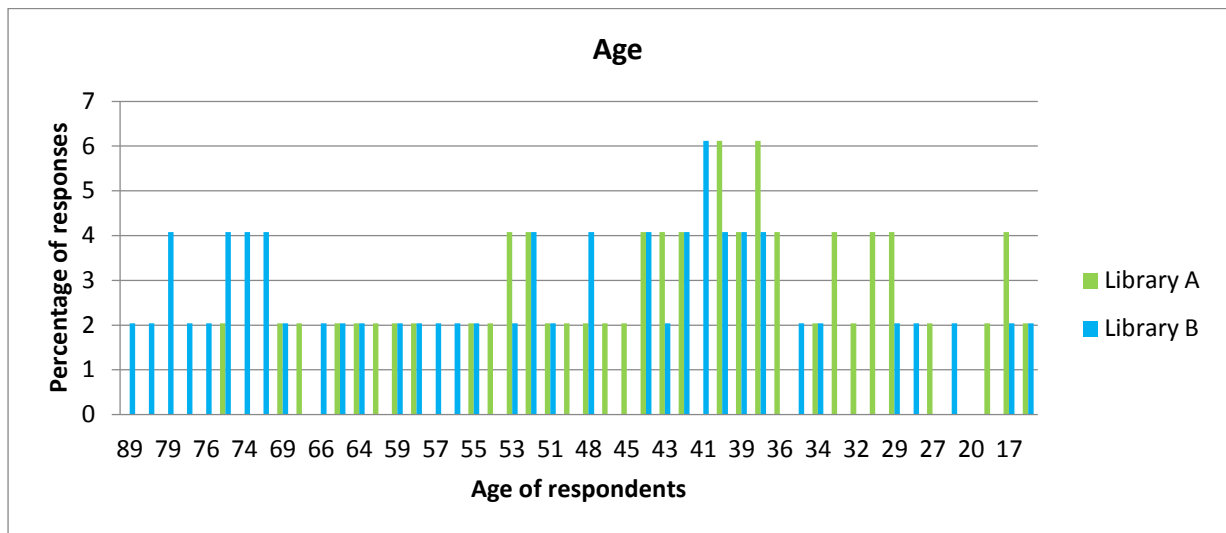


Figure 3: Age of respondents N=50 at each library

4.1.4 Do you discuss the books you read with other people?

Question four of the questionnaire interrogates the relationship between leisure reading and its possible beneficial impact, by asking if the participants discussed what they read with other people. As explained in Chapter 3 (page 33) the logic behind this question was to demonstrate the internalisation of what the individual had read as reflected in their ability to talk about what had been read.

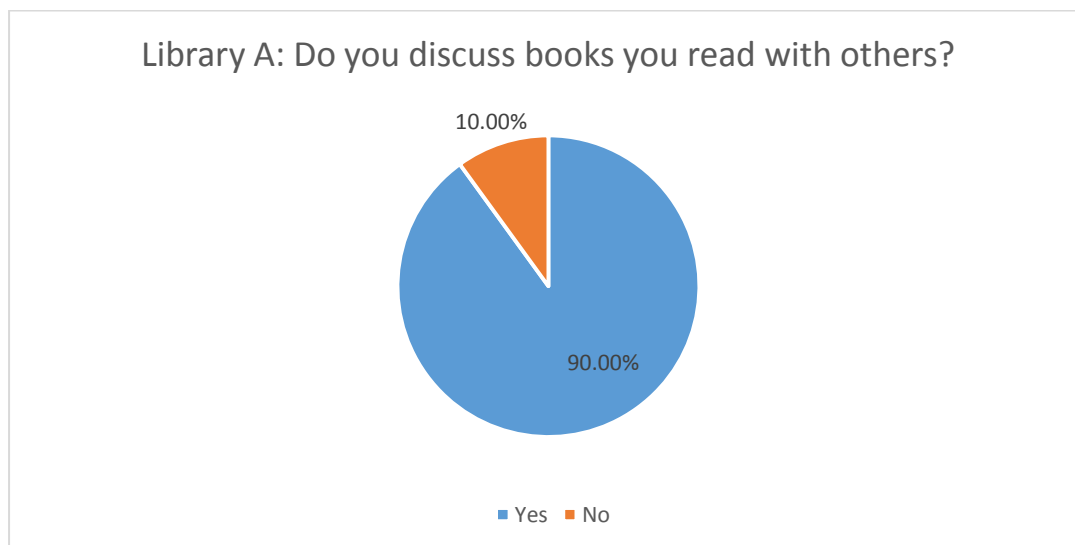


Figure 4: Library A: Do you discuss books you read with others? N=49

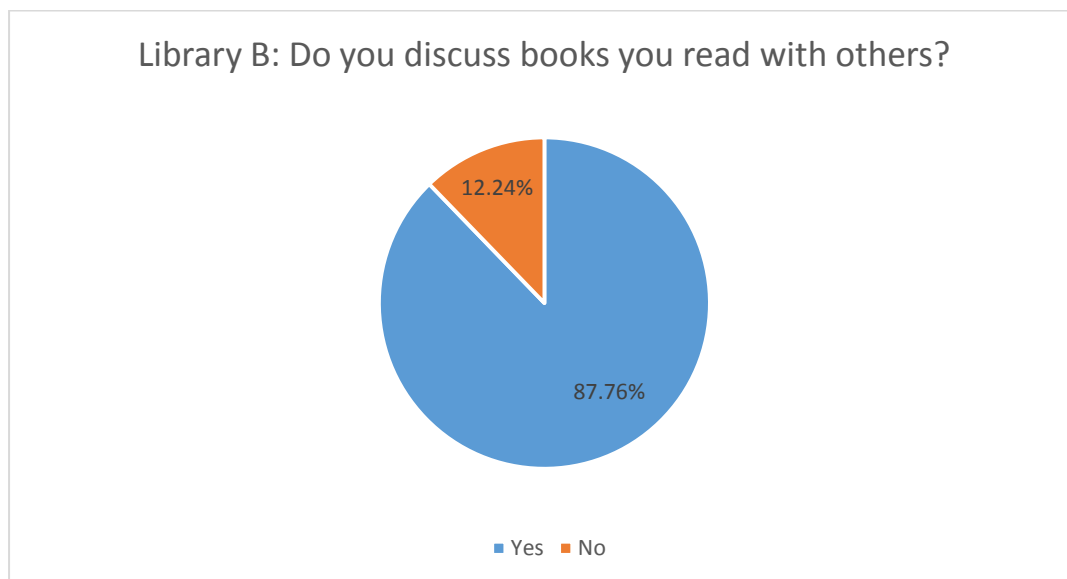


Figure 5: Library B: Do you discuss books you read with others? N=50

The results for this question are nearly identical at both libraries, with Library A participants reporting 87.42% (n= 43) affirmative with 12.24% (n=6) in the negative (one did not respond). While Library B had 90% (n=45) agreeing with the statement and 10% (n=5) disagreeing (see Figures 4 and 5). This is a notable result in that it shows that the majority of the participants, from both libraries, were sufficiently interested and could recall enough about something they had read to discuss it with someone else. Ross (2009) reported that her study found that the participants would often offer revisionist versions of the stories they had read frequently reframing the message of the original work. This finding reflects the characteristics of literacy practice as defined by Ivanic, Barton and Hamilton (2000) as what people do with what they read: sharing, internalising or learning.

4.1.5 What types of book do you like to read?

Question five was designed to explore what genres people chose to read. As mentioned earlier the purpose, behind this question, was to determine if genre preference had any influence on the learning experience. This will be interrogated further in the discussion of the findings in Chapter 5.

When comparing the genre preferences at the two libraries, a distinctive pattern of similarities and variances also emerged. The responses to each genre are listed individually (see Tables 8 – 18 that follow). The participants were asked to rate their genre preference by completing a table where they ranked each genre as one that they 'Love', one that they find 'OK' or one that they 'Do not read' (See Table 7 on page 34 for more detail).

Library A			Library B		
Romance			Romance		
	n	%		n	%
Love	14	31	Love	13	31
OK	15	33	OK	15	36
Do not read	16	36	Do not read	14	33

Table 8: Romance at Library A and B

In Table 8, a virtually identical interest in the Romance genre is indicated by both groups of library users. It would appear from the interviews that romance books are selected for both the escapism and uplifting nature of the stories. It is also worth noting that from the interviews, it would appear that gender does not play a role in the selection of Romance fiction at Library A as more than half of the men interviewed (three) indicated that they read romance novels.

Library A			Library B		
Religious Fiction			Religious Fiction		
	n	%		n	%
Love	18	42	Love	9	26
OK	17	40	OK	11	32
Do not read	8	18	Do not read	14	41

Table 9: Religious fiction at Library A and B

There are more extreme differences between the two libraries in the preference for Religious fiction, with a greater percentage of respondents who do not read this genre in Library B (see Table 9). Based on these results it would appear that the community around Library A are more religious as 42% from Library A indicated that 'Love' Religious fiction and only 26% at Library B gave the same response. This could be a typical reflection of the level of education and wealth that typically changes the attitude towards religion and shows a move towards secularisation (Bruce, 2002: 24-27) and is a reflection of the different make-up of these communities.

Library A			Library B		
Historical Fiction			Historical Fiction		
	n	%		n	%
Love	12	29	Love	14	39
OK	21	50	OK	14	39
Do not read	9	21	Do not read	8	22

Table 10: Historical fiction at Library A and B

Whilst the attitude towards Historical fiction is not as extreme in its difference, there is a distinct preference for this genre at Library B compared with Library A when looking at

those who love the genre. It would be difficult to ascribe a societal based reason for this difference (see Table 10).

Library A			Library B		
Crime Fiction			Crime Fiction		
	n	%		n	%
Love	17	40	Love	18	50
OK	19	44	OK	15	42
Do not read	7	16	Do not read	3	8

Table 11: Crime fiction at Library A and B

Crime fiction showed a similar spread between the libraries with once again a higher percentage at Library B preferring Crime fiction (Table 11). The difference may simply be due to the personal preferences of the participants.

Library A			Library B		
Thrillers			Thrillers		
	n	%		n	%
Love	13	35	Love	19	50
OK	16	43	OK	11	29
Do not read	8	22	Do not read	8	21

Table 12: Thrillers at Library A and B

The interest in Thrillers displayed a higher percentage of those who 'Love' the genre amongst the participants at Library B as compared with those from Library A (Table 12); a similar pattern as to that for Crime fiction.

Library A			Library B		
Science Fiction			Science Fiction		
	n	%		n	%
Love	7	18	Love	3	11
OK	11	28	OK	10	37
Do not read	21	54	Do not read	14	52

Table 13: Science fiction at Library A and B

Science Fiction is clearly not a favourite amongst most people surveyed (Table 13). There is a minority at Library A who demonstrated a preference for this genre. Surprisingly, this result is reversed, when the question refers to Fantasy fiction at Library B (Table 14).

Library A			Library B		
Fantasy Fiction			Fantasy Fiction		
	n	%		n	%
Love	3	8	Love	6	19
OK	14	37	OK	11	35
Do not read	21	55	Do not read	14	45

Table 14: Fantasy at Library A and B

As mentioned earlier fantasy fiction does not appear to be popular at either library. Library B has a much higher percentage of (and double the number of) respondents who love Fantasy fiction. It is interesting to note that most public libraries tend to market the Romance, Fantasy and Science fiction genres by providing dedicated shelving for these genres, separate from the rest of the fiction section. While it is clear from Tables 8, 9, 11 and 12 that Romance, Thrillers, Crime and Religious fiction are popular, it would appear that marketing less popular genres such as Science Fiction and Fantasy fiction (Table 14 and 15), and often placing them together, may not be achieving the desired result of broadening the appeal of these genres. Admittedly these genres do tend to appeal to a younger audience who may have been excluded (unintentionally) from this study.

Library A			Library B		
Biographies			Biographies		
	n	%		n	%
Love	16	42	Love	19	51
OK	15	39	OK	12	32
Do not read	7	18	Do not read	6	16

Table 15: Biographies at Library A and B

Biographies enjoy similar levels of interest at both libraries. This may well be because people wish to learn about how other people experience certain aspects of life. One could interpret this as a willingness and conscious effort to learn about other people's experiences, attitudes and values. This interest in Biographies is shared by readers in the USA, who rank biographies as the third most popular genre after Mystery and Historical fiction (Statista, 2014).

Library A			Library B		
Health (non-fiction)			Health (non-fiction)		
	n	%		n	%
Love	12	30	Love	11	29
OK	20	50	OK	16	42
Do not read	8	20	Do not read	11	29

Table 16: Health non-fiction at Library A and B

One of the fields on which libraries are considered to have a positive impact is that of health information (ISO 16439, 2014: 14), so it was important to try to discern whether the participants were making use of the library as a resource for health information. Table 16 shows that the attitude towards books on the subject of health was not overwhelmingly positive. While one of the participants wrote that he had changed his medication as a result of reading a book from the library, this raises all sorts of questions about the risk of providing books that offer medical advice that could contradict a doctors' advice. None of the other participants mentioned this.

Library A			Library B		
Do-it-Yourself (non-fiction)			Do-it-Yourself (non-fiction)		
	n	%		n	%
Love	9	24	Love	12	32
OK	17	45	OK	19	50
Do not read	12	31	Do not read	7	18

Table 17: Do-it-yourself non-fiction at Library A and B

The percentage of participants who made use of Do-it-yourself books was greater at Library B while those at Library A were less inclined to read this type of book (Table 17).

Library A			Library B		
Inspirational (non-fiction)			Inspirational (non-fiction)		
	n	%		n	%
Love	21	50	Love	12	35
OK	11	26	OK	10	29
Do not read	10	24	Do not read	12	35

Table 18: Inspirational (non-fiction) at Library A and B

There was a strong preference amongst respondents from Library A (50%) who indicated that they love Inspirational non-fiction as opposed to those at Library B whose respondents displayed a much lower level of interest in this genre (35%). This is a similar pattern to the answers to the question about Religious fiction.

4.1.6 Where do you get your books from?

The sixth question asked the participants about the source of their reading matter: whether the books they read were taken from the public library or from other sources. In both libraries, fewer than 50% of respondents borrowed all the books they read from the public library (Figures 6 and 7). During the interviews it became apparent that many people borrow books from others and, in most cases, the reason was because of the library's

opening time constraints and the difficulty of returning the books on time. This is an issue of accessibility with which public libraries struggle and which only longer opening hours can address. It is worth noting that Library A is open more hours than Library B, forty-one compared to thirty-five hours per week, which may have contributed to the higher percentage of participants from Library A (48% compared to 39%) who got all of their reading matter from the library. This may also be due to Library A being in a less affluent community who are not able to purchase books.

When combined with the number of responses to the option, 'I get more than half the books I read (from the library)' it can be seen (in Figures 6 and 7) that the public library is the primary source of books for the respondents, 80% from Library A and 86% from Library B, but notably not the only source. This is something public libraries need to be aware of, recognising their unique role in the book chain and relationship to other components. A small minority indicated that they get less than half of the books they read from the library: 18% from Library A and 14% from Library B. The higher percentage, of participants getting less than half their books from Library A, is a surprise as one would have expected that the public library would be the predominant source of reading matter in a less affluent community. Based on the interviews at Library A, some people have their own book collections and lend these to friends and family and many of the religious institutions, in the community have libraries. These 'private' libraries, as well as libraries hosted at religious institutions, are the other sources of books in the community around Library A.

Library A provides me with the books I read

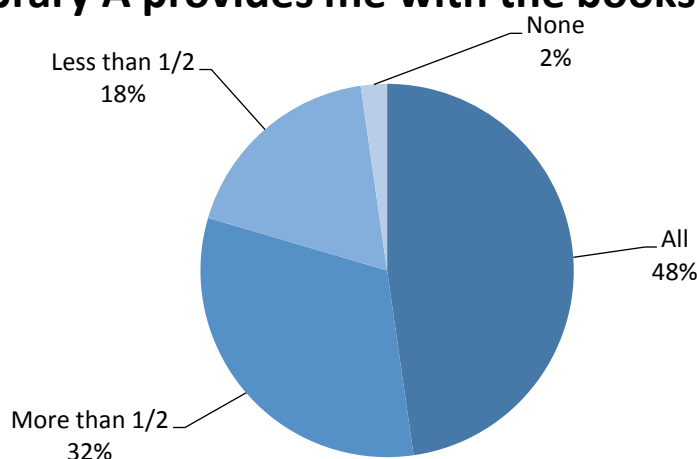


Figure 6: Library A provides me with the books I read N=50

Library B provides me with the books I read

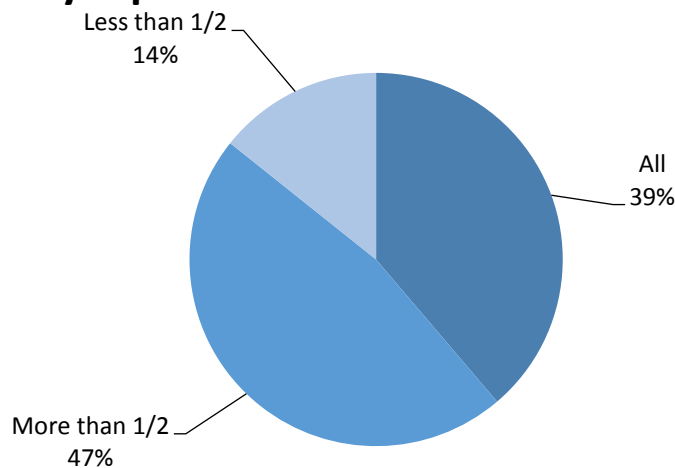


Figure 7: Library B provides me with the books I read N=50

This finding, that the library does not act as the single source for reading material or is the only provider of reader guidance, supports the assertion by Dempsey (2016) that libraries need to recognise that they are no longer the only source of information and reader guidance, and rather that they play a role in the lives of the user and community which needs to be better understood and acted upon. Dempsey (2016) asserts that librarians should move out of their 'walls' and consider "... the library in the life of the user rather than the user in the life of the library."

When comparing the volume read (Question 2) with the primary source of reading material, results show that Library A (Figure 8) users who read a great deal tend to report that the library provides the bulk of their books (more than half or all of their books). With Library B the heavy readers tend to be found amongst those who get most, but not all, of their books from the library (Figure 9). This could be a reflection of the income disparity between the two suburbs with potentially a higher percentage of Library B users owning books.



Figure 8: Public library as source of books - Library A N=50



Figure 9: Public library as source of books - Library B N=50

4.1.7 Generic Learning Outcomes

The next part of the questionnaire consisted of a series of questions intended to address whether any of the participants had experienced, when reading, any of the GLOs as listed in Chapter 4. Eleven statements were generated with nine relating to a specific GLO and two to check for the respondents' awareness of learning and to test whether participants were reading the questions accurately. These two questions needed to be answered in the negative, as opposed to the other questions in the survey, and so acted as 'trap' questions.

The responses to the statements testing the GLOs were predominately positive at both sites. The following tables (19–30) list all the responses to these questions. All percentages are rounded up. Questions four and eight, the 'trap' questions, should have been answered in the negative (assuming a positive outcome) and do not refer to a GLO. Rather than record the results in the sequence that the questions appear on the questionnaire, I have chosen to group, for each library, the results by the GLO that the questions are designed to test. In some of the tables the percentages do not equal 100%, this is due to not all participants answering the questions and the rounding up or down of the percentages.

Library A

GLO - Knowledge and understanding		
Reading has helped me understand why some people behave in a certain way		
	n	%
Agree	42	88
Do not know	3	6
Disagree	3	6
I think reading has allowed me to better understand historical events		
	n	%
Agree	42	88
Do not know	5	10
Disagree	1	2

Table 19: Knowledge and understanding – Library A

GLO - Attitudes and values		
Reading has given me a better understanding of people who are different from me		
	n	%
Agree	43	90
Do not know	3	6
Disagree	2	4
Reading has helped me deal with my emotions and feelings		
	n	%
Agree	41	85
Do not know	3	6
Disagree	4	8

Table 20: Attitudes and values – Library A

GLO - Skills		
Reading has improved my communication skills		
	n	%
Agree	44	90
Do not know	5	10
Disagree	0	0
Reading has helped me to better understand what other people are feeling		
	n	%
Agree	42	88
Do not know	6	13
Disagree	0	0

Table 21: Skills – Library A

GLO - Action, behaviour, progression		
Reading has made me change the way I do something in daily life		
	n	%
Agree	40	83
Do not know	5	10
Disagree	3	6
Reading has helped me understand problems and solve them		
	n	%
Agree	40	82
Do not know	8	16
Disagree	1	2

Table 22: Action, behaviour, progression – Library A

GLO - Enjoyment, inspiration and creativity		
Reading has inspired me to try something new		
	n	%
Agree	45	92
Do not know	3	6
Disagree	1	2
* This question is paired with first question of the questionnaire		

Table 23: Enjoyment, inspiration and creativity – Library A

Awareness of learning and 'trap' questions		
Reading has taught me very little		
	n	%
Agree	2	4
Do not know	3	6
Disagree	43	90
Nothing I read relates to my life		
	n	%
Agree	9	20
Do not know	4	9
Disagree	33	72

Table 24: Awareness of learning and 'trap' questions – Library A

Library B

GLO - Knowledge and understanding		
Reading has helped me understand why some people behave in a certain way		
	n	%
Agree	44	90
Do not know	3	6
Disagree	2	4
I think reading has allowed me to better understand historical events		
	n	%
Agree	45	92
Do not know	4	8
Disagree	0	0

Table 25: Knowledge and understanding – Library B

GLO - Attitudes and Values		
Reading has given me a better understanding of people who are different from me		
	n	%
Agree	45	88
Do not know	3	6
Disagree	3	6
Reading has helped me deal with my emotions and feelings		
	n	%
Agree	37	77
Do not know	4	8
Disagree	7	15

Table 26: Attitudes and values – Library B

GLO - Skills		
Reading has improved my communication skills		
	n	%
Agree	47	92
Do not know	3	6
Disagree	1	2
Reading has helped me to better understand what other people are feeling		
	n	%
Agree	43	88
Do not know	4	8
Disagree	2	4

Table 27: Skills – Library B

GLO - Action, behaviour, progression		
Reading has made me change the way I do something in daily life		
	n	%
Agree	38	78
Do not know	6	12
Disagree	5	10
Reading has helped me understand problems and solve them		
	n	%
Agree	39	78
Do not know	6	12
Disagree	5	10

Table 28: Action, behaviour, progression – Library B

GLO - Enjoyment, inspiration and creativity		
Reading has inspired me to try something new		
	n	%
Agree	37	73
Do not know	8	16
Disagree	6	12
* This question is paired with first question of the questionnaire		

Table 29: Enjoyment, inspiration and creativity – Library B

Awareness of learning and trap questions		
Reading has taught me very little		
	n	%
Agree	3	6
Do not know	3	6
Disagree	42	88
Nothing I read relates to my life		
	n	%
Agree	4	8
Do not know	1	2
Disagree	43	90

Table 30: Awareness of learning and trap questions – Library B

From the preceding tables (19–30) one can clearly see that the participants overwhelmingly recorded positive outcomes of reading in relation to all the GLOs. It is also clear that the results appear to be reliable as the questions for the same GLO achieved very similar, or the same, ratios of favourable and unfavourable responses. The variation in the number of responses to certain questions is as a result of some of the participants not answering those questions.

For the most part the answers are similar at the two libraries to all the questions, yet certain responses show some variations between the two libraries. For example, question: **Reading has inspired me to try something new**, there is a nineteen percent difference between the number of people agreeing with the statement: 92% at Library A and 73% at Library B.

Question: **Reading has helped me deal with my emotions and feelings**, also showed a large variation (8%) between the libraries, with 85% at Library A and 77% at Library B. The difference in this instance is greater than the difference in the other questions except for question: **Reading has inspired me to try something new**, mentioned above.

It is noteworthy that the two questions discussed above that do not relate to the same GLO had almost the identical responses at both sites. The first question of the survey (**I find reading an enjoyable part of my life**) addressing the GLO **Enjoyment, inspiration and creativity** had almost identical responses from both sites. The same comparison cannot be said about the responses in Table 23 and 29. Despite the question: **Reading has inspired me**

to try something new, reflecting the same GLO participants at Library A indicated 92% agreement and Library B 73% agreement with the statement compared with 100% and 98% respectively for the first question of the questionnaire.

Questions 7.3 and 7.9 (Table 20 and 26) covering the GLO, **Reading has given me a better understanding of people who are different from me**, show virtually no variation between the two sites in the response to those questions.

One question that did give a noteworthy response at Library A was that which stated, **Nothing I read relates to my life**, (Table 24). This was one of the 'trap' questions that needed to be answered in the reverse in comparison to the preceding questions. Twenty percent (n=9) of the participants indicate they agreed with this statement. This could be a reflection of two possibilities: one is that the 'wrong answer' was selected but that is contradicted by the answer to the other 'trap' question, **Reading has taught me very little**, which does not show the same result.

Only four percent (n=2) agreed with that statement. This leads me to conclude that these participants did not find reading matter that related to their lives or that their choice of reading matter may be from genres that they feel reflect their lives or it could be due to language preference. This could be worth investigating further as it is considered to be one of the explanations for the perceived lack of a reading culture amongst many South Africans (South African Book Development Council, 2016).

4.1.8 Please name a leisure reading book that has greatly influenced your life

The last question of the survey was open-ended, viz. **Please name a leisure reading book (a book that you read for no other reason than you wanted to; not for study or school) that has greatly influenced your life. Please elaborate on how this book has impacted your life.** The responses to this question are broken down as follows: at Library A thirty-one responded to the question, though some of the titles were difficult to categorise.

The following pattern emerged:

- 13 respondents indicated novels;
- 6 general non-fiction;
- 3 biographies;
- 3 religious non-fiction;
- 3 the Bible, and;
- 2 periodicals.

The balance could not be categorised. The breakdown of novels tended more towards family-based drama or romance. The comments referred to learning about other cultures and other people's points of view. More respondents from Library A than Library B said how the books they had listed impacted directly on their lives, with typical explanations offered such as the following:

*It mirrors the type of life I have led which prompted me to write my own book. (a comment on *Of Human Bondage* by W. Somerset Maugham)*

One respondent mentioned how books with gay protagonists helped them come to terms with their sexual orientation. Crime novels featured twice and one novel in isiXhosa – unfortunately with no explanation as to the reason for its nomination.

At Library B, twenty-nine respondents answered this question with the results broken down as follows:

- 12 respondents indicated novels;
- 7 general non-fiction;
- 3 biographies;
- 3 religious non-fiction;
- 2 Christian fiction, and;
- 2 the Bible.

In general, the comments from Library B, about the novels focused on learning about other people's experiences and cultures. The general non-fiction that was indicated tended towards self-help or learning a skill. Christian religious books collectively made up one of the

largest groupings. As with the responses at Library A, most of the non-fiction mentioned in the responses from Library B had religious themes.

The following comment made by a respondent from Library B echoes many of the comments made about novels:

*Helped me realise you always have to look at things from the other side. (a comment about *To kill a Mocking Bird* by Harper Lee)*

A number of participants singled out non-fiction books with a Christian theme, offering some form of advice for overcoming setbacks in life or dealing with grief. Biographical or autobiographical books did not seem to have the same impact and the comments tended to focus more on events that took place rather than identifying with the subject of the book and their experiences. The novel *Shantaram* by Gregory David Roberts, which vividly describes life in Mumbai, India, appears on both lists, as does Nelson Mandela's autobiography *A Long Walk to Freedom*.

The questionnaire closed with a request for contact details if the participants were willing to take part in follow up interviews.

4.2 Further analysis

The results drawn directly from the questionnaires' data shows that the majority of the participants reported a positive correlation between their reading experience and all the learning outcomes identified from the literature. What follows is a section exploring the relationship between some of the different responses in an effort to establish if any other significant relationships can be found.

Before drilling down further into the data collected, it was important to decide what aspect of the data gathered would provide meaningful or useful information. The following points, that relate back to the research question, have been selected as a basis for deciding how the data should be analysed at a more granular level.

1. To test for reliability: Do the questions about specific GLO return the same results?
2. Does genre preference influence learning?
3. Does age influence library use and perception of learning?
4. Does the use of the library's print collection and volume of books read influence the outcome?

The four points above establish the framework for the further analysis of the data.

In most cases this involves relating the responses to different questions to each other to determine whether a pattern or relationship can be detected between these factors.

4.2.1 Reliability

The first query was “Did the method return reliable results?” The most effective way to confirm this was to establish if the responses to the questions referring to a specific GLO were answered in the same way by the participants. In other words, are the ratio of positive or negative responses to the two questions relating to the same GLO recorded (for more detail on the GLOs please refer to Chapters 2 and 3). Additionally, if the questions are clear and the participant knows the answer then the responses are more likely to be reliable (Babbie, 2016: 147). Within the constraints of this study I have chosen to use the approach that if the questions are clear then the same ratio of positive responses should be forthcoming.

The test is to see whether the number and type of responses match the questions. If this is the case at both sites, this would indicate that the results from these questions are reliable as there is consistency in the responses to questions that test the same variable. The results for each research site are listed in the following figures (12–25) including the two questions and the results relating to a specific GLO as indicated, (see Table 2 in Chapter 3). The results for each GLO related question are displayed using pie charts for ease of comparison. These charts are accompanied by text explaining my analysis and excerpts from the interviews that provide supporting evidence to the conclusions drawn. The results from each library are presented individually, starting with Library A.

4.2.1.1 Library A

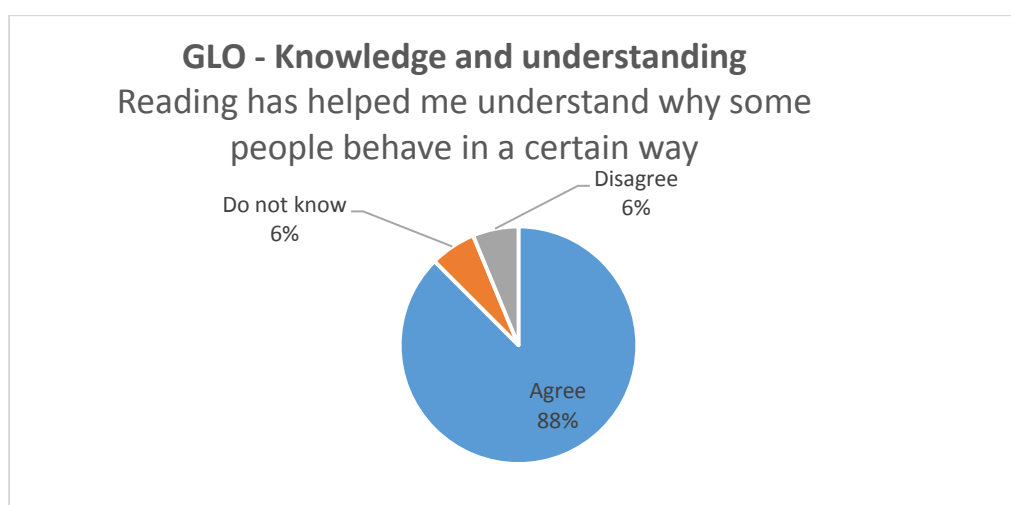


Figure 10: Library A GLO - Knowledge and understanding – Reading has helped me understand why some people behave in a certain way N=48

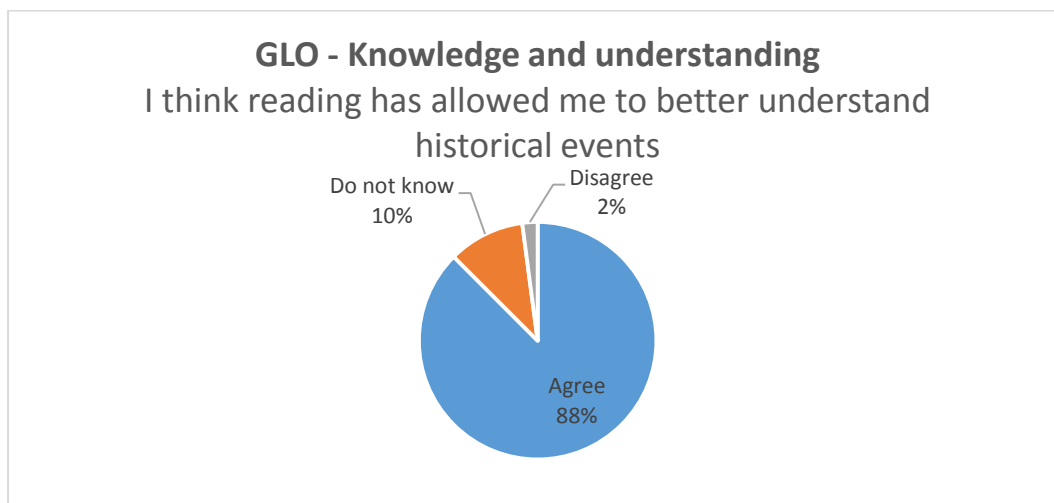


Figure 11: Library A GLO - Knowledge and understanding – I think reading has allowed me to better understand historical events N=48

The preceding responses to the statement, **Reading has helped me understand why some people behave in a certain way**, (Figure 10) were echoed in the responses to the interview question, **Can you think of a time when something you read in a book had impact on how you reacted to a situation you experienced?** at Library A with answers such as:

It's (the book) telling about reality how depression... depression the women cause...my wife...she was depressed and then she stayed in hospital for quite long so I was reading that book ...and also understand how to like to treat her...the person...
(Library A interview 1)

A similar response was:

When I read that is where I get motivation from other people that have walked the same road that I want to walk through. (Library A interview 4)

Considering their answers to questions relating to the knowledge and understanding of the GLO, it is evident that the participants from Library A had learnt something identifiable during their leisure reading.

Figure 11 displays the results of the question, **I think reading has allowed me to better understand historical events**. The results are almost identical to the other question for the same GLO (Knowledge and understanding) with 88% agreeing with the statement. It is only with the 'Do not know' and 'Disagree' that we see any variations. None of the interviewees volunteered any information on historical novels when discussing their reading preferences.

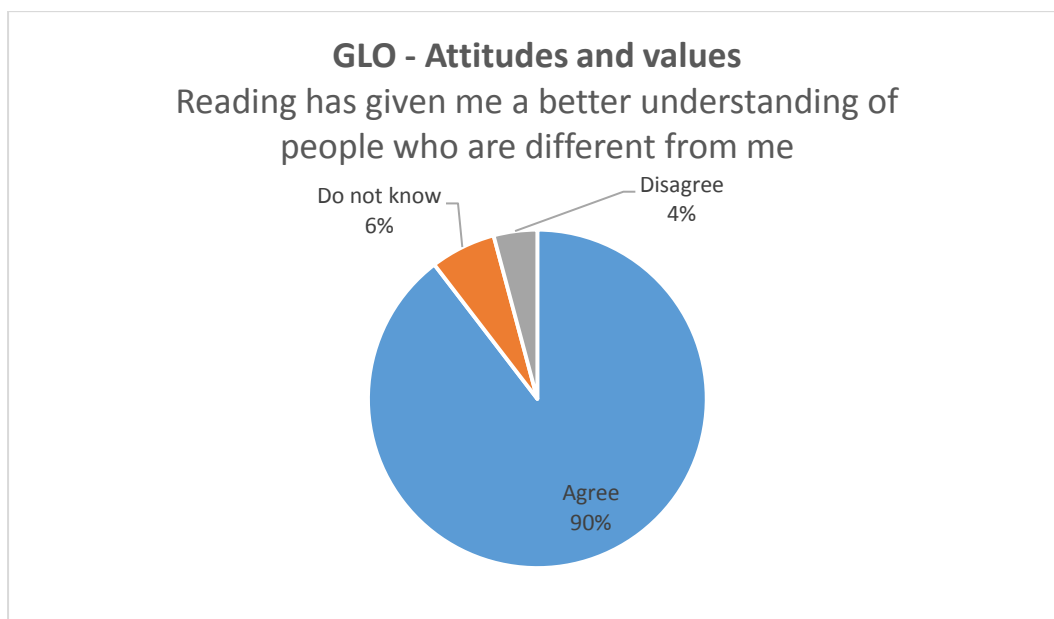


Figure 12: Library A GLO - Attitudes and values – Reading has given me a better understanding of people who are different from me N=48

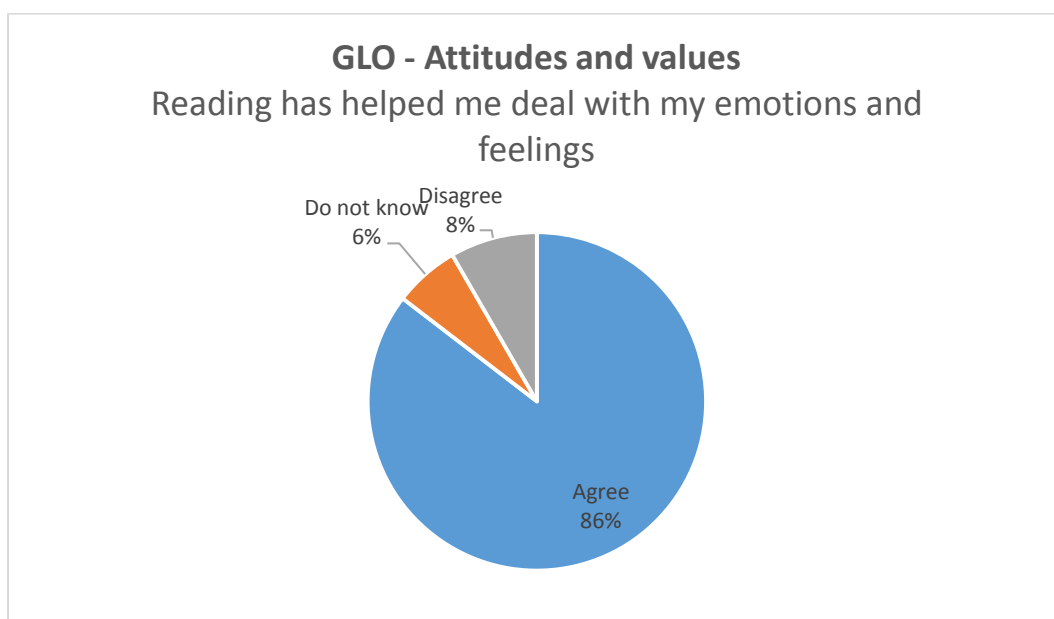


Figure 13: Library A GLO - Attitudes and values – Reading has helped me deal with my emotions and feelings N=48

There was also consistency in the responses to questions 7.3 and 7.9, both of which addressed the GLO of Attitudes and values. Over 40 people agreed that reading had given them a better understanding of others and had helped them deal with their emotions.

One response, from the interviews, summed up the role books can play in developing attitudes and values by explaining how the book, *Crossing the boundary fence* by Patricia Chater, encouraged the reader to change his mind set about other people:

Because everybody was having like a preconceived mind set to say, I think this one is like this and then I think this one is like that, but not knowing exactly, you see? So that was one book I read that I always think of when I see maybe people fighting and maybe in a xenophobic manner or just a hate speech you know, things like that, then I just say I wish people had read that book, you know? (Library A interview 4)

As with the previous two questions, the clear majority of the participants felt that the books they had read impacted on their values and attitudes towards others. Once again, the results for each question are almost identical.

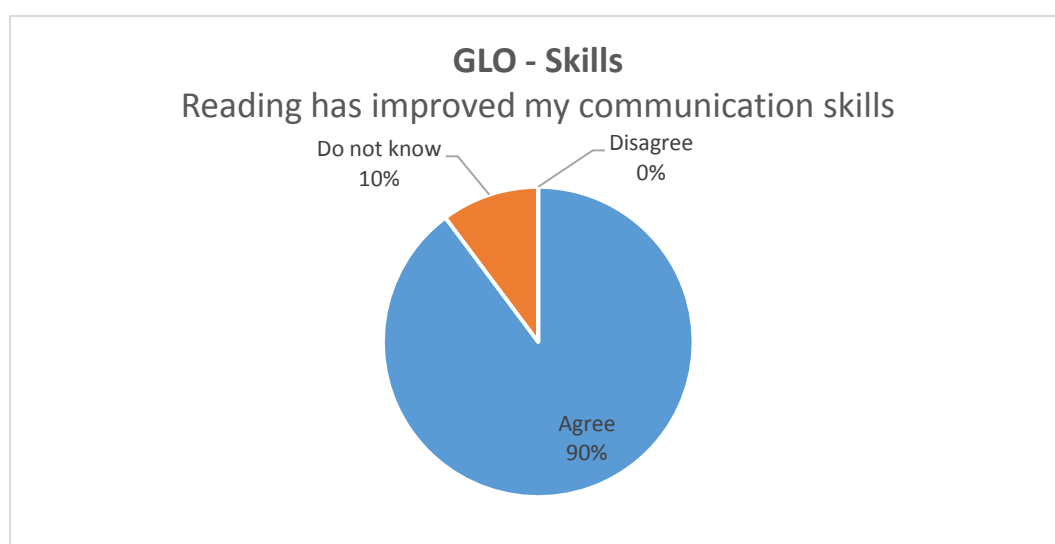


Figure 14: Library A GLO - Skills – Reading has improved my communication skills N=49



Figure 15: Library A GLO - Skills – Reading has helped me to better understand what other people are feeling N=48

The questions selected for the Skills GLO had to be relatable to fiction as well as non-fiction books. As a result, fairly non-specific questions were chosen that could be related to what the participants may have read in both types of books.

The comment below, from the interviews, illustrates how participants in the study can relate to the second question, **Reading has helped me to better understand what other people are feeling**, illustrating an instance where reading is associated with developing the ability to empathise with others' feelings:

Oh yes, there is something that I learn. And... is like... it's like I'm that person sometimes. I'm that person and I want to be like that person. (Library A interview 2)

Once again there is a strong correlation between the responses to both questions with 90% and 87% agreeing with the two questions respectively (See Figures 14 and 15). This positive response demonstrates that the readers questioned are identifying new skills that they are learning while reading. At the same time, these skills are a reflection of positive change within the individual, with improved communication and developing the ability to empathise with others.

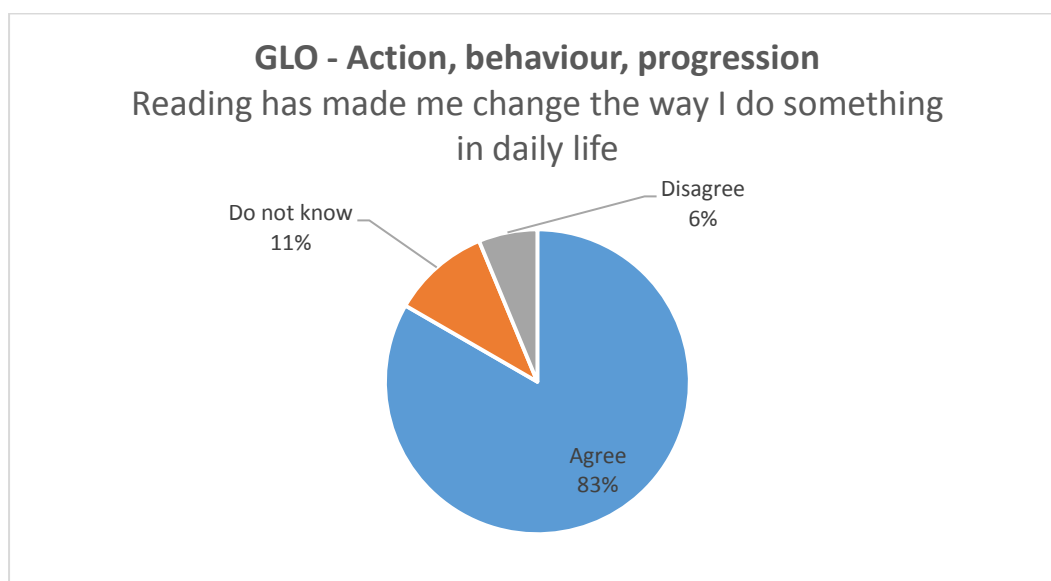


Figure 16: Library A GLO - Action, behaviour, progression – Reading has made me change the way I do something in daily life N=48

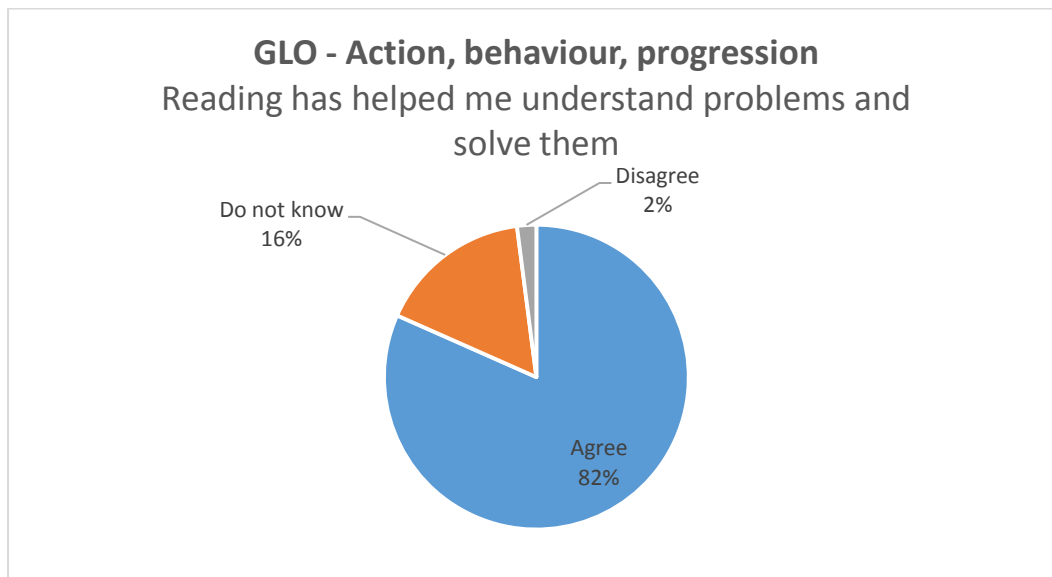


Figure 17: Library A GLO - Action, behaviour, progression – Reading has helped me understand problems and solve them N=49

Once again, there were consistently similar responses to both questions addressing the GLO **Action, behaviour and progression**, showing that books play a big role in how the participants model their behaviour. This is supported by a comment made during one of the interviews, which deals with the practical application to daily life of something that was read:

Things that I didn't know before then I've noticed it it's in the books and then I try it in my life and then I see it works. So I won't say but you know, I can say it, it makes me a better person. (Library A interview 2)

4.2.1.2 Library B

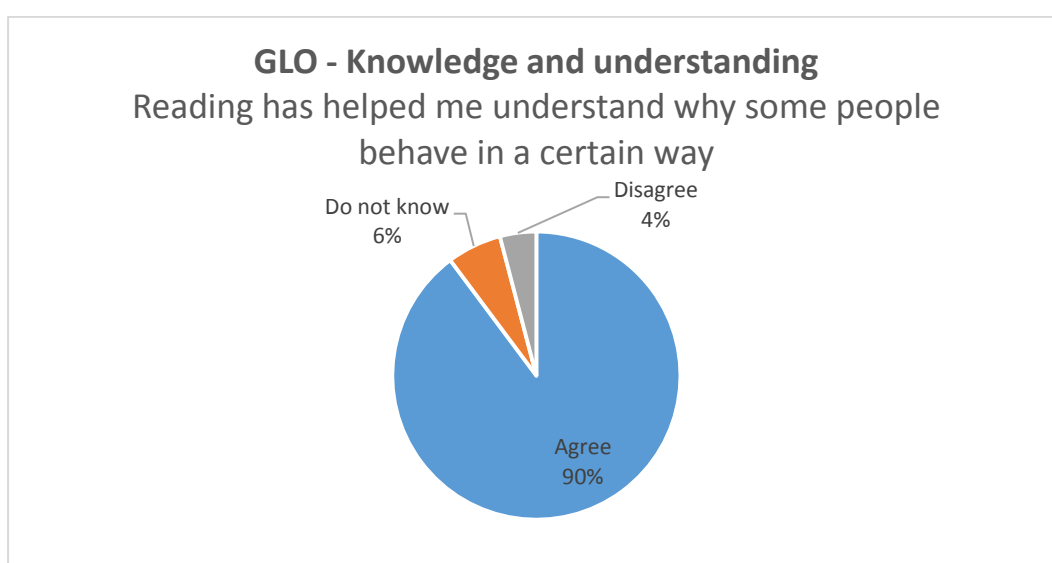


Figure 18: Library B GLO - Knowledge and understanding – Reading has helped me understand why some people behave in a certain way N=49

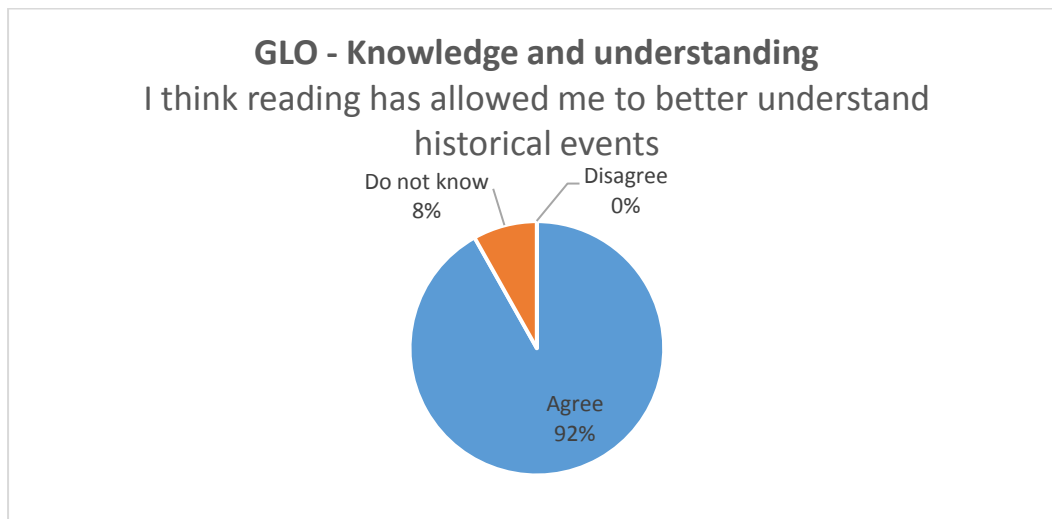


Figure 19: Library B GLO - Knowledge and understanding – I think reading has allowed me to better understand historical events N=49

Analysis shows a very strong similarity in the results of the questions, **Reading has helped me understand why some people behave in a certain way** and **I think reading has allowed me to better understand historical events**, eliciting the same response from the participants at Library B. The interview responses supported this result as two respondents' comments below show:

So you can start learning outside of your school curriculum depending on what's available to you in your library if you have access to a library. And you can carry on learning forever. (Library B interview 1)

Or sometimes it just gives you an insight or understanding of things. Or it just gives you more knowledge and wisdom so I feel like reading is powerful because it can shift your mindset and the way you think and the way you do things because you have more knowledge. (Library B interview 2)

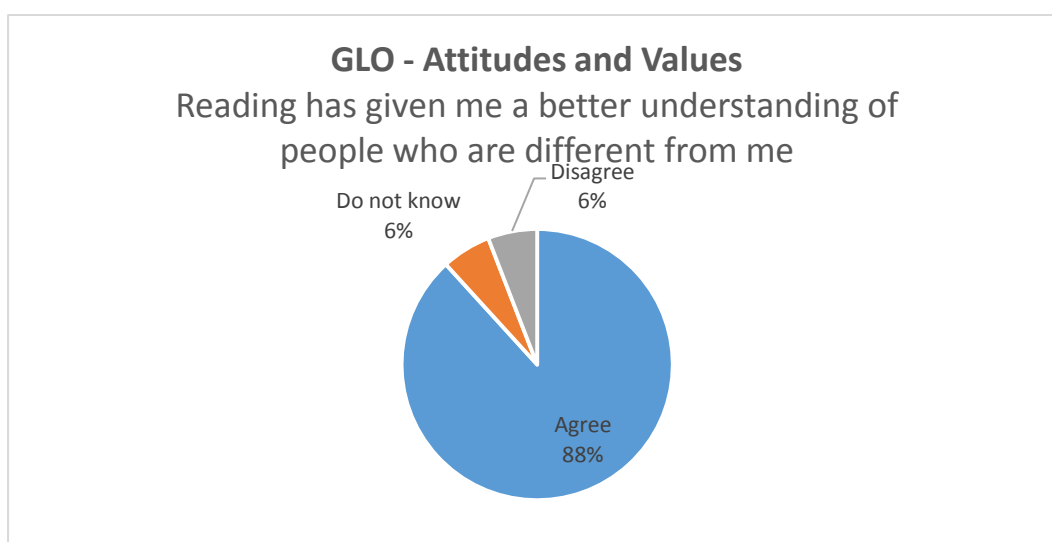


Figure 20: Library B GLO - Attitudes and Values – Reading has given me a better understanding of people who are different from me N=50

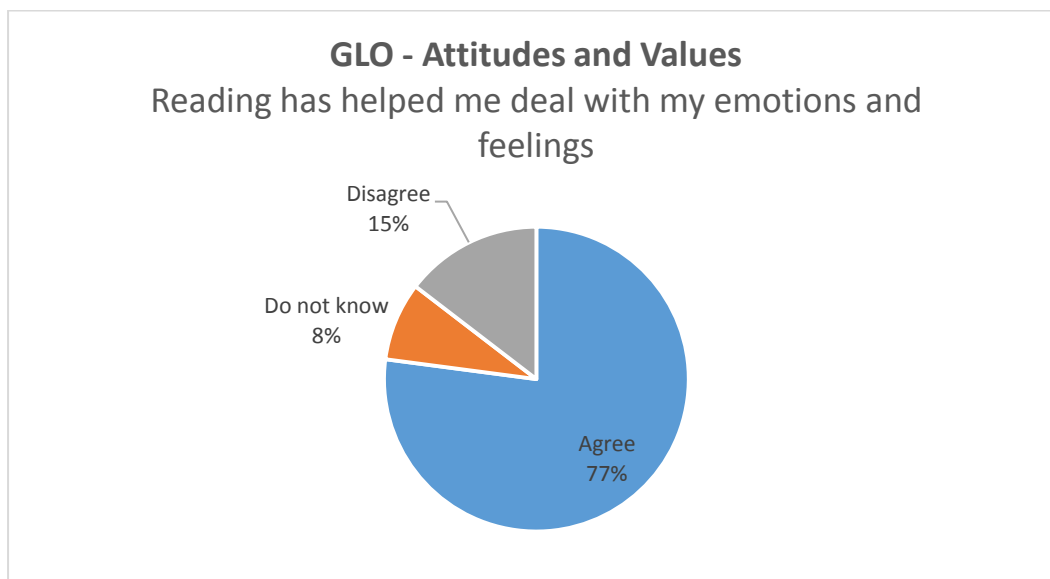


Figure 21: Library B GLO - Attitudes and Values – Reading has helped me deal with my emotions and feelings N=50

The responses to these two questions referring to the GLOs indicating **Attitudes and values** (Figures 20 and 21), at Library B were the only ones yielding an appreciable difference in the number of positive responses between the two questions with 88% agreeing, **Reading has given me a better understanding of people who are different from me**, and only 77% agreeing that **Reading has helped me deal with my emotions and feelings**. This difference was not found at Library A (90% versus 86%). This unexpected result could cast some doubt on the reliability of the testing method, as none of the other GLO questions displayed a comparable disparity. However, it is more likely that the answers are an anomaly rather than a flaw in the testing method. The following could explain it. It is possible that the age of the participants and their cultural background may have played a role in their responses. During the interviews some respondents from Library A expressed more emotional responses to what they had read while those from Library B tended to be more analytical. The positive responses for this GLO are still in the majority, so one can safely say that there is general agreement with the statements.

For the GLO **Skills** (Figures 22 and 23), a high percentage of positive responses (almost identical to those from Library A) confirm that communication skills and empathy, referred to in the questions, are easily identifiable by the participants from both libraries as those gained from reading. These are skills, communication and empathy, normally associated with reading, something that Krashen (1993) found during his research. Both skills were reported as one of the benefits of reading by researchers (Krashen, 1993; Nell, 1988) in the field. This could explain the high number of positive responses.

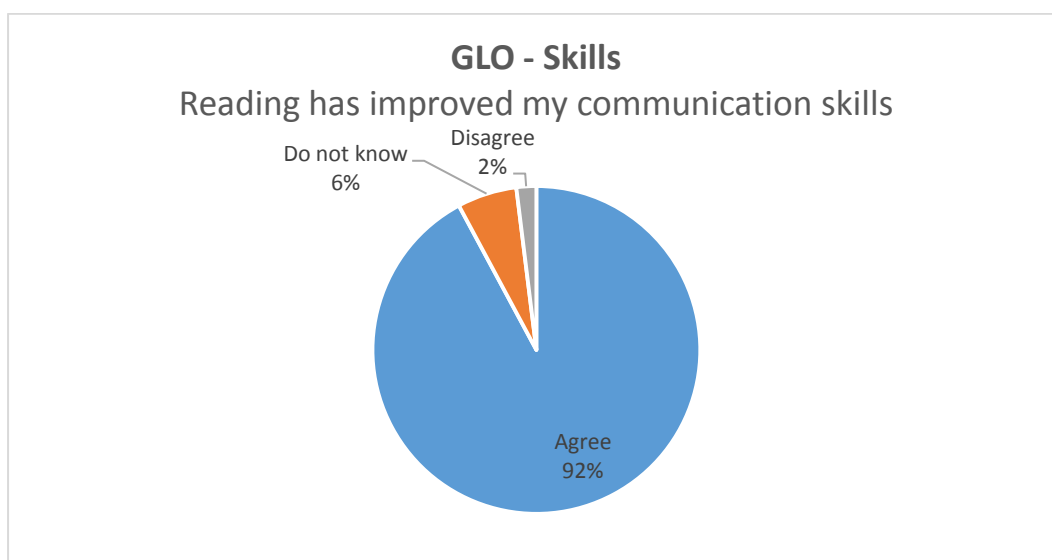


Figure 22: Library B GLO – Skills – Reading has improved my communication skills N=50

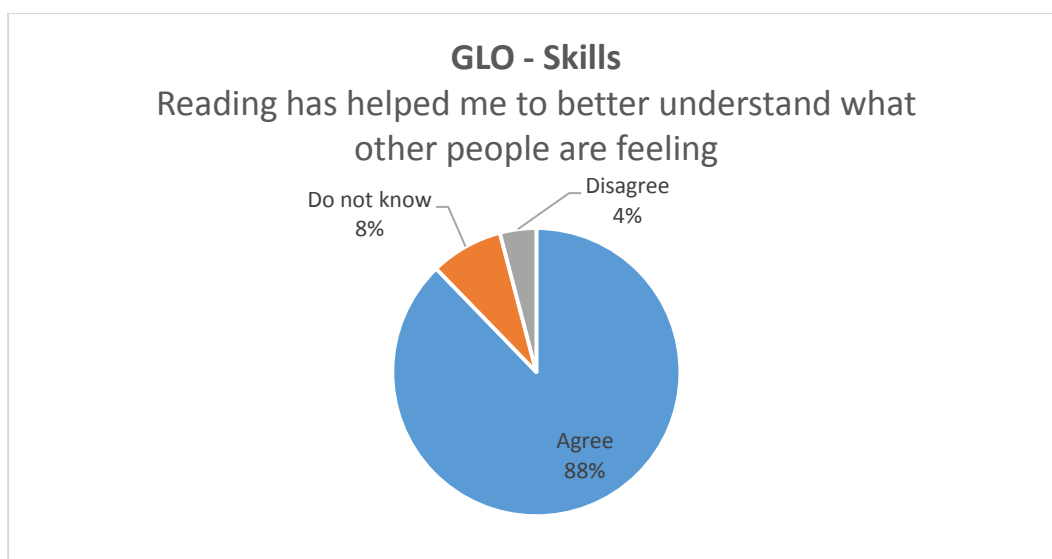


Figure 23: Library B GLO - Skill – Reading has helped me to better understand what other people are feeling N=50

Identical ratio of responses (Figures 24 and 25) are given to these two questions (as it was with Library A) showing that these questions give reliable feedback. What is notable is the difference in the percentage of positive responses between the two research sites. At Library A 83% agreed with the statement, **Reading has made me change the way I do something in daily life** and 82% with the statement, **Reading has helped me understand problems and solve them**, as opposed to the 78% that agreed with both statements at Library B.

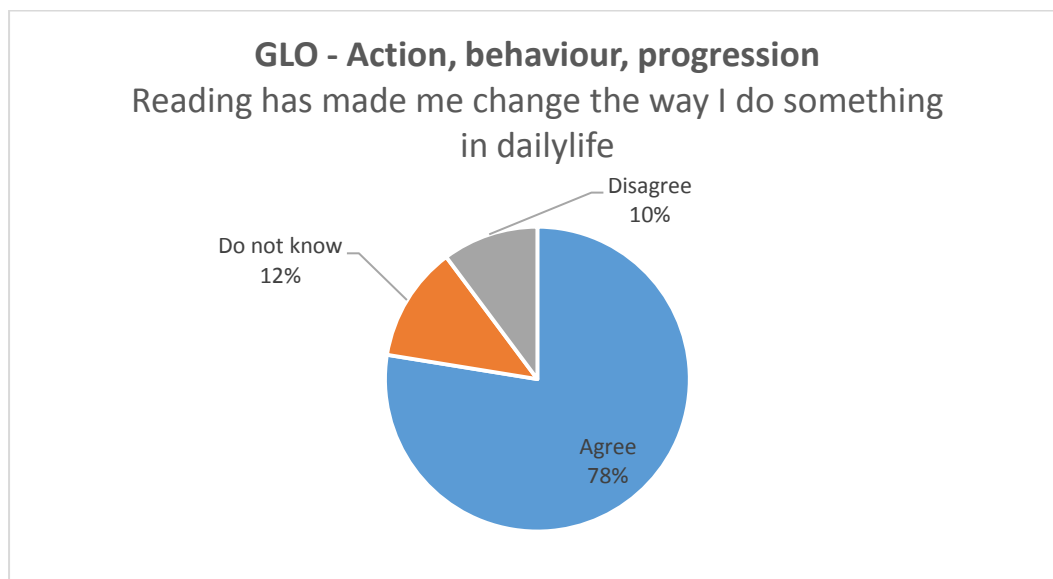


Figure 24: Library B GLO - Action, behaviour, progression – Reading has made me change the way I do something in daily life N=49

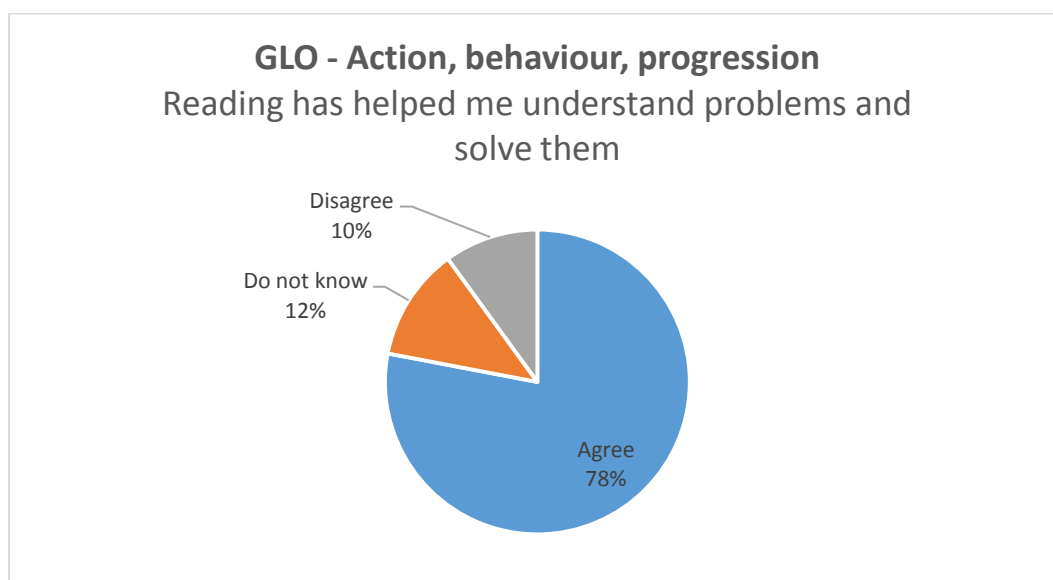


Figure 25: Library B GLO - Action, behaviour, progression – Reading has helped me understand problems and solve them N=50

The questions linked to specific GLOs have produced almost identical results at each library with, in most cases, only a 1% or 2% difference. Only at Library B is there a greater difference in answers, for example, the two questions for the GLO **Attitudes and values** have an 11% difference in the number of positive responses. This difference is not even close in size at Library A (5%). This difference in results can only be due to the different nature of these communities and their relationship with what they read, as found by Coomber and Cormack (1977) in their research.

Since the results for the various GLOs are similar at each library, I have concluded that the instrument was reliable. The next section investigates genre preference and its influence on the responses of the participants.

4.3 Genre preference and GLO outcomes

In this section I examine if genre preference influences the type of learning that takes place while reading. To start with, I analysed the results based on the responses to Romance fiction. Table 8 in this chapter showed that Romance fiction had a similar level of interest at both sites, thus providing the best genre for comparison.

In Table 31 (below and continued on the following page) I have combined the results from the questions that asked the participants to rate their genre preferences and the results of the questions on the various GLOs. For ease of reading I have chosen to exclude the participants who consider Romance 'OK' and only include the participants who either 'Love Romance' fiction or 'Do not Read Romance' fiction. The tables that follow show only the participants who gave those responses to this question.

Library A	Love Romance N=14			Do not read Romance N=16		
	Agree	Do not Know	Disagree	Agree	Do not Know	Disagree
GLO - Knowledge and understanding						
Reading has helped me understand why some people behave in a certain way	84.62%	7.69%	7.69%	87.50%	12.50%	-
I think that reading has allowed me to better understand historical events	85.71%	7.14%	7.14%	93.75%	6.25%	-

Continued on the next page

GLO - Attitudes and Values						
Reading has given me a better understanding of people who are different from me	92.86%	7.14%	-	87.50%	6.25%	6.25%
Reading has helped me deal with my emotions and feelings	100.00%	-	-	75.00%	12.50%	12.50%
GLO – Skills						
Reading has improved my communication skills with other people	85.71%	14.29%	-	93.75%	6.25%	-
Reading has helped me to better understand what other people are feeling	85.71%	14.29%	-	87.50%	12.50%	-
GLO - Action, behaviour, progression						
Reading has made me change the way I do something in daily life	78.57%	14.29%	7.14%	87.50%	6.25%	6.25%
Reading has helped me understand problems and solve them	85.71%	14.29%	-	75.00%	12.50%	12.50%
GLO - Enjoyment, inspiration and creativity						
* This question is paired with question 1 of the survey						
Reading has inspired me to try something new	92.86%	-	7.14%	93.75%	6.25%	-

Table 31: Library A Romance genre and GLOs

At Library A, the responses are not that different between those who 'Love Romance' (28%) and those who 'Do not read' (32%). Those that 'Love Romance' do indicate better ability to deal with emotions (100% versus 75%). However, no distinctive trend is observable other than a small variation within some of the GLOs. In the overall results there is no notable difference in the responses for the various GLOs between those who prefer a particular genre or not. For Library A, reading a particular genre, Romance in this case, does not appear to have any impact on the effect that reading has on the individual. It is not possible

to distinguish any difference between leisure reading in general and reading a specific genre makes when relating the benefits of reading.

For Library B (see table 32) the findings are similar except for a few of the GLOs. For example, the ability to deal with emotions emerges as one GLO where those that prefer Romance score well, as in Library A. In most cases, the results reflect the same results as the sample from Library A. One interesting result is in connection with the GLO – **Action, behaviour, progression** where on average only 60% of the participants who do not read Romance agreed with the outcomes as opposed to those who do read Romance where 82% agreed with the statements.

In most cases where the questions focused on more factual information, such as the one about historical events, readers tended to score lower on soft skills, while those reading Romance tended to score slightly higher. Library B respondents expressed greater disdain for Romance fiction with the result that they did not observe learning associated with this genre.

Library B	Love Romance n=13			Do not read Romance n=14		
	Agree	Do not know	Disagree	Agree	Do not Know	Disagree
GLO - Knowledge and understanding						
Reading has helped me understand why some people behave in a certain way	91.67%	8.33%	-	78.57%	14.29%	7.14%
I think that reading has allowed me to better understand historical events	76.92%	23.08%	-	100.00%	-	-
GLO - Attitudes and Values						
Reading has given me a better understanding of people who are different from me	84.62%	7.69%	7.69%	92.86%	-	7.14%
Reading has helped me deal with my emotions and feelings	81.82%	9.09%	9.09%	64.29%	21.43%	14.29%

Continued on the next page ...

GLO - Skills						
Reading has improved my communication skills with other people	100.00%	-	-	92.86%	-	7.14%
Reading has helped me to better understand what other people are feeling	83.33%	8.33%	8.33%	78.57%	14.29%	7.14%
GLO - Action, behaviour, progression						
Reading has made me change the way I do something in daily life	84.62%	7.69%	7.69%	57.14%	21.43%	21.43%
Reading has helped me understand problems and solve them	76.92%	23.08%	-	64.29%	21.43%	14.29%
GLO - Enjoyment, inspiration and creativity						
* This question is paired with question 1 of the survey						
Reading has inspired me to try something new	84.62%	7.69%	7.69%	78.57%	14.29%	7.14%

Table 32: Library B Romance genre and GLOs

The results from the analysis presented in Table 32 are not conclusive, suggesting that genre preference does not play any role in determining the benefits of reading.

4.4 Age and GLO outcomes

Looking at the age of the participants as a factor influencing the impact of reading did not reveal any startling results for Library A (see Figure 26). From the scatter plot graph, which plots the date of birth of the participants against the different responses to the GLOs (Agree, Do not know, Disagree), one can see that there is a slight propensity amongst the older participants to agree with the GLO statements (and less for the trap questions that are not included in this particular analysis). Other influences (sources of information) probably have a greater impact on the younger participants (such as the internet and social media). It is worth noting that age had little impact on the genre preference in Library A.

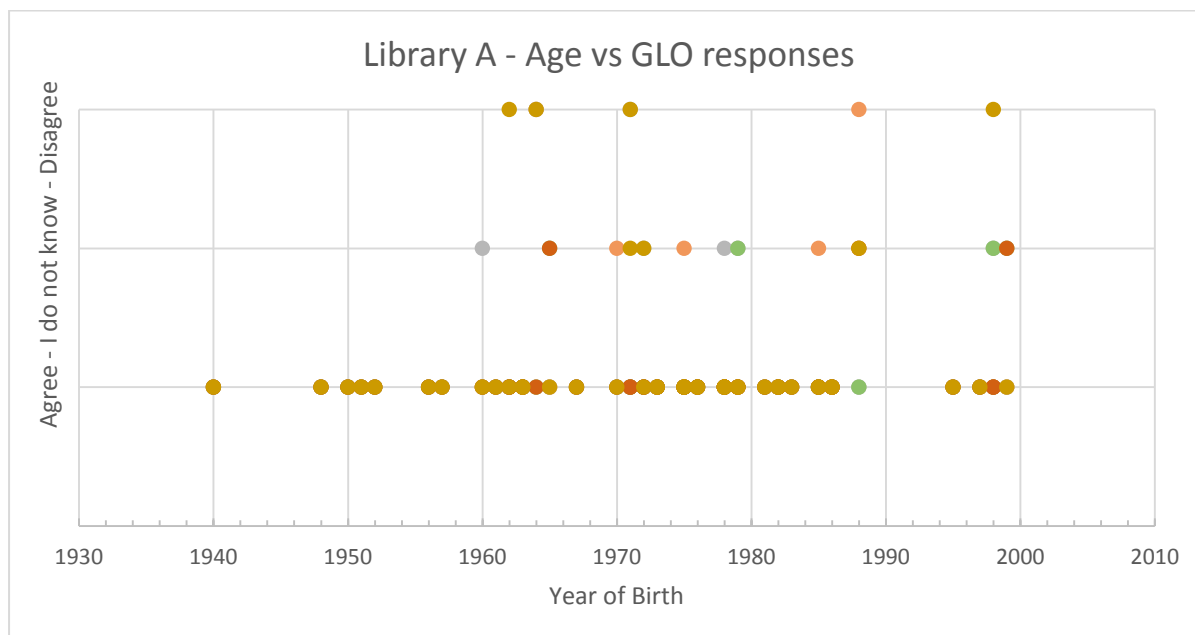


Figure 26: Library A - Age vs GLO responses N=50

In Library B, the distribution of responses and age were less skewed towards a particular age group and rather more uniform across the age groups (see Figure 27). I conclude that age at Library B is less of a predictor of potential impact of the print collection than at Library A.

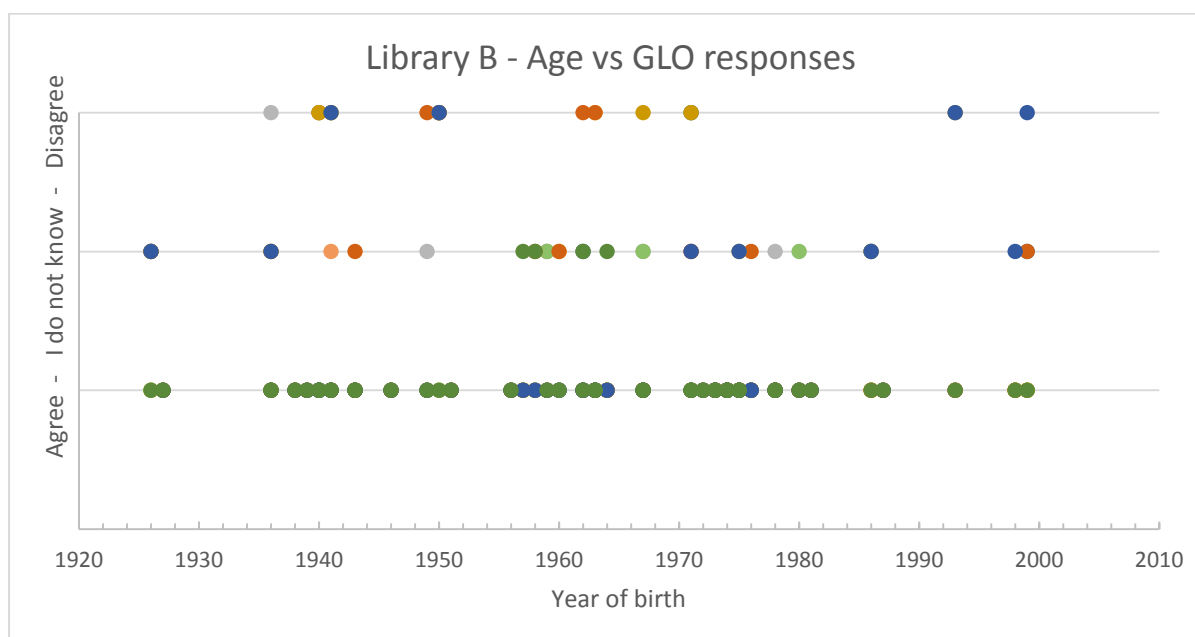


Figure 27: Library B Age vs GLO Responses N=50

4.5 Use of the library print collection and volume read as influence on benefit

In this section, I have compared the level of dependence on the library collection, as a source of reading material, and its relationship to the participants' GLO scores. To do so, I have broken down the responses to the GLO questions by the level of library collection use (Question 6 of the questionnaire) in order to map the intensity of library use against the

strength of effect of the GLO. I have separated out those who indicated that they got all their books from the library and mapped their responses to the GLOs. I have done likewise for the participants who indicated that they got more than half and for those that borrowed less than half their books from the library. The following table 33 shows these responses. The trap questions have been omitted. The first set of tables (33–37) refer to Library A.

Library A

GLO - Knowledge and understanding						
Reading has helped me understand why some people behave in a certain way						
Library as a source of:	100% of books		More than half		Less than half	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Agree	20	95	14	93	6	100
Do not know	1	5	1	7	-	-
Disagree	-	-	-	-	-	-
I think reading has allowed me to better understand historical events						
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Agree	20	95	12	92	6	100
Do not know	1	5	1	8	-	-
Disagree	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 33: Library A GLO - Knowledge and understanding

Table 33 shows no statistically relevant difference in the responses. Those who do not primarily use the library as a source for books seem to learn more, or the same, in relation to this GLO.

GLO - Attitudes and values						
Reading has given me a better understanding of people who are different from me						
Library as a source of:	100% of books		More than half		Less than half	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Agree	18	86	14	100	7	100
Do not know	2	9	-	-	-	-
Disagree	1	5	-	-	-	-
Reading has helped me deal with my emotions and feelings						
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Agree	18	86	13	92	8	86
Do not know	1	5	1	8	-	-
Disagree	2	9	-	-	1	14

Table 34: Library A, GLO - Attitudes and Values

The results in Table 34 show a very similar distribution to those in Table 33. At Library A, it would appear that for these GLOs, library print collection use did not confer any

appreciatively greater benefit on the users that primarily use the library collection than those who do not.

GLO – Skills					
Reading has improved my communication skills					
Library as a source of:	100% of books		More than half		Less than half
	n	%	n	%	n %
Agree	19	90	14	100	5 71
Do not know	2	10	-	-	2 29
Disagree					
Reading has helped me to better understand what other people are feeling					
	n	%	n	%	n %
Agree	18	86	13	92	6 86
Do not know	3	14	1	8	1 14
Disagree					

Table 35: Library A GLO – Skills

There is a slightly more noticeable decline (Table 35) in the positive responses for the first question of the GLO **Skills**. Of those who get less than half their books from the library 71% agreed with the statement in comparison to 90% for those who get all their books from the library. All of those who get more than half their books from the library agreed with the question about reading and communication skills. More of this group also agreed with the statement about understanding others' feelings, compared with those who get all their books from the library and those borrowing less than half of what they read.

GLO - Action, behaviour, progression					
Reading has made me change the way I do something in daily life					
Library as a source of:	100% of books		More than half		Less than half
	n	%	n	%	n %
Agree	18	86	12	92	5 72
Do not know	3	14	1	8	1 14
Disagree					1 14
Reading has helped me understand problems and solve them					
	n	%	n	%	n %
Agree	19	90	12	86	5 71
Do not know	2	10	2	14	2 29
Disagree					

Table 36: Library A GLO - Action, behaviour, progression

Table 36, for the GLO - **Action, behaviour, progression**, shows the first instance where a distinct difference can be seen in the responses between those who use Library A as a primary source for books and those who do not. A decline in the positive responses to the question **Reading has made me change the way I do something in daily life** can be seen from those who get 100% of their books and those who get more than half. None of the participants agreeing to be interviewed fell into the group that got less than half their reading matter from the library, so it is difficult to reach any conclusion about why the result should be so different from the responses to the other GLOs. The second question **Reading has helped me understand problems and solve them** shows a similar pattern of results are found, with the other GLOs, when the participants source more of their books from the library with a higher the percentage agreeing with the statements.

GLO - Enjoyment, inspiration and creativity						
Reading has inspired me to try something new						
Library as a source of:	100% of books		More than half		Less than half	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Agree	20	95	14	100	6	86
Do not know	1	5	-	-	1	14
Disagree						

Table 37: Library A GLO - Enjoyment, inspiration and creativity

An examination of Tables 33 – 37 yields statistically notable results pointing towards a shift in behaviour based on the use of the respective libraries' print collections. With the relatively small sample and with, in most cases, 10% or smaller shift in the responses, one cannot really infer anything of significance about the use of the library's print collection without additional evidence. In most cases, the highest percentage of positive responses tend to be from those participants that use the library as the primary source of books. This could be simply as a result that those who use the library as the primary source of reading material tend to read more (Figure 28) and therefore, the benefits accumulate. However, the results are not conclusive. As with any study of a public library's impact it is difficult to isolate the library's influence on the individual (Poll & Payne, 2006: 550).

One of the GLOs that showed an almost 20% shift in the responses was for the GLO - **Action, behaviour, progression** (Table 36), where participants getting less than half their books from the library displayed a 14% drop in those agreeing with the statement, **Reading has made me change the way I do something in daily life** compared with those participants who got all their books from the library. There was a 19% difference for the second

question, **Reading has helped me understand problems and solve them.** These results show that the participants who borrowed the majority of their reading matter from the library agreed that they had experienced a positive outcome, in relation to that GLO, from reading at a far higher percentage than those who did not.

The participants from Library A who got most their reading matter from the library do read more than the other respondents, which could go some way to explaining the slightly higher percentage of positive responses relating to the reading experience (see Figure 28). For ease of comparison I have duplicated Figures 8 and 9 as Figures 28 and 29 respectively.

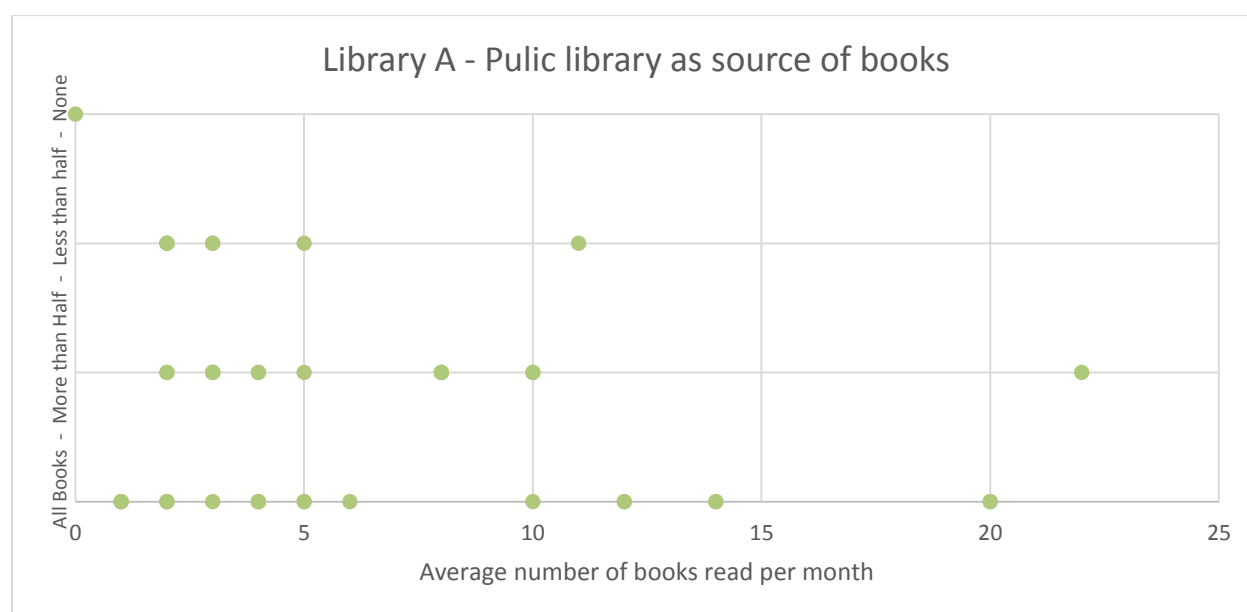


Figure 28: Library A - Public library as source of books N=50

One could draw the conclusion from Figure 28 that for the users of Library A there is a small difference in benefit experienced between those who extensively use the library's print collection and those who do not. Those reporting greater benefit from reading tend to use the library print collection more. Figure 28 shows that those who read the most books tend to use the library as the primary source of books.

For Library B there is a slightly bigger difference in the distribution of the results between those who use the library predominately for books and those who do not. Once again, the small sample does not allow for any sweeping generalisations, but it is worth exploring the results in Tables 38 – 42 in more depth.

For the **knowledge and understanding** GLO (Table 38) questions there is a noticeable difference between those who primarily use the library for books and those who use it less than half for the first question. Of those who get all their books from the library, 100% agree

with the statement, **Reading has helped me understand why some people behave in a certain way** versus 57% of those who get less than half their books from the library. This question refers to people's behaviour, and in a later question on a similar theme (see Table 40) we see similar responses. I am inclined to attribute this difference to the same reason suggested previously, that the higher number of books read, by those using the library as their main source of books, results in greater benefits to those participants.

Library B

GLO - Knowledge and understanding						
Reading has helped me understand why some people behave in a certain way						
Library as a source of:	100% of books		More than half		Less than half	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Agree	18	100	20	90	4	57
Do not know	-	-	1	5	2	29
Disagree			1	5	1	14
I think reading has allowed me to better understand historical events						
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Agree	16	84	21	95	6	100
Do not know	3	6	1	5	-	-
Disagree						

Table 38: Library B GLO - Knowledge and understanding

This results for Library B are very similar to those for Library A.

GLO - Attitudes and values						
Reading has given me a better understanding of people who are different from me						
Library as a source of:	100% of books		More than half		Less than half	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Agree	18	95	19	83	6	86
Do not know			3	13	1	14
Disagree	1	5	1	4		
Reading has helped me deal with my emotions and feelings						
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Agree	15	80	15	75	5	71
Do not know	2	10	2	10	-	-
Disagree	2	10	3	15	2	29

Table 39: Library B GLO - Attitudes and Values

Table 39 shows some variation between those participants who use the library exclusively for books and those who do not. However, with such a small margin of difference this cannot be ascribed to a particular variable. In this case, in contrast to what was recorded at Library A there is a bigger variation between those participants who primarily source their

reading matter from the library (all) and those who do not (less than half). This is most noticeable for the statement, **Reading has helped me deal with my emotions and feelings.**

GLO – Skills					
Reading has improved my communication skills					
Library as a source of:	100% of books		More than half		Less than half
	n	%	n	%	n %
Agree	18	95	22	96	5 71
Do not know	1	5	-	-	- -
Disagree	-	-	1	4	2 29
Reading has helped me to better understand what other people are feeling					
	n	%	n	%	n %
Agree	17	89	19	90	5 71
Do not know	2	11	2	10	- -
Disagree	-	-	-	-	2 29

Table 40: Library B GLO – Skills

Table 40 shows a big difference between those participants who obtain their books primarily from the library and those who do not. While 95% and 89%, respectively, of those who get all their books from the library agreed with the two statements, just 71% of those who got less than half their reading matter from the library agreed with the same statements. It appears that people who select most of their books from the library are more inclined to recognise that they may have learnt something. Table 41 shows a similar trend.

GLO - Action, behaviour, progression					
Reading has made me change the way I do something in daily life					
Library as a source of:	100% of books		More than half		Less than half
	n	%	n	%	n %
Agree	16	84	16	76	4 57
Do not know	2	11	3	14	1 14
Disagree	1	5	2	10	2 29
Reading has helped me understand problems and solve them					
	n	%	n	%	n %
Agree	15	80	17	77	5 72
Do not know	2	10	3	14	1 14
Disagree	2	10	2	9	1 14

Table 41: Library B GLO - Action, behaviour, progression

I think the results in Table 41 above provide a meaningful conclusion about the relationship of the source of reading material and the GLO. Once again, a higher percentage of those using the library as the primary source of books report greater agreement with the

statements relating to the relevant GLO, **Action, behaviour, progression**. The fact that those who tend not to use the public library for the majority of the books they read report lower levels of perceived learning and this could be seen in a positive light, as far as the public library is concerned. Without further investigation, it would be impossible to discern the reason for this.

GLO - Enjoyment, inspiration and creativity					
Reading has inspired me to try something new					
Library as a source of:	100% of books		More than half		Less than half
	n	%	n	%	n %
Agree	13	69	17	74	5 72
Do not know	5	26	2	9	1 14
Disagree	1	5	4	17	1 14

Table 42: Library B GLO - Enjoyment, inspiration and creativity

The findings of this GLO, **Enjoyment, inspiration and creativity**, presented in Table 42, shows a result that is opposite to those of the other questions. In the response to this question, a higher percentage of participants indicated that they got more than half; or less than half of their books from the library indicated that they agreed with the statement, compared with those who get all their books from the library. The small size of the difference, in the percentage of the responses, does not permit any definitive conclusion.

It would appear from the results in table 42 that, unlike Library A, there is a much larger difference in the reported learning between the participants who source all their books from the library and those who do not. For many of the GLOs the difference is more than 20%. As with Library A the GLO with the biggest variation is the one relating to GLO - **Action, behaviour, progression** showing that people who tend to read less and source books from places other than the public library do not recognise that what they read will directly change their behaviour.

There could be two possible explanations for this difference in results. The first is that people who chose to read more are more inclined to learn while doing so, in particular about ways of doing things. The second suggests a state of mind: people making use of the library's print collection consider the contents of the books to be more valuable and are investing more time in the pursuit of leisure reading than people who rely less on the library's print collection. What is clear from the preceding tables is that where the library is

the primary source of reading material the perceived benefits of reading are greater. Since this study was limited to people using the library it would be impossible to speculate about the experiences of people not using the library.

Based on what is reported in the literature, the results of this research are consistent with the study by Vakkari and Serola (2011) who reported that the general public in Finland see the benefit of public libraries, primarily, as a source for leisure reading (fiction and non-fiction).

As far as the variation in the answers to the two questions relating to the GLO - **Attitudes and values** (as mentioned earlier), nearly the same percentage of positive responses appear across all levels of library use at both Library A and B. This indicates that certain of the GLOs appear to return the same level of results independent of library use. Figure 29 (Repeat of Figure 9) below shows a breakdown of library use at Library B and the number of books read per month. Clearly those that read the most books tend to use the library as the primary source of books, a similar pattern to Library A (see Figure 28). In both Libraries there is a strong concentration of respondents that read a great deal but do not get their books solely from the library.

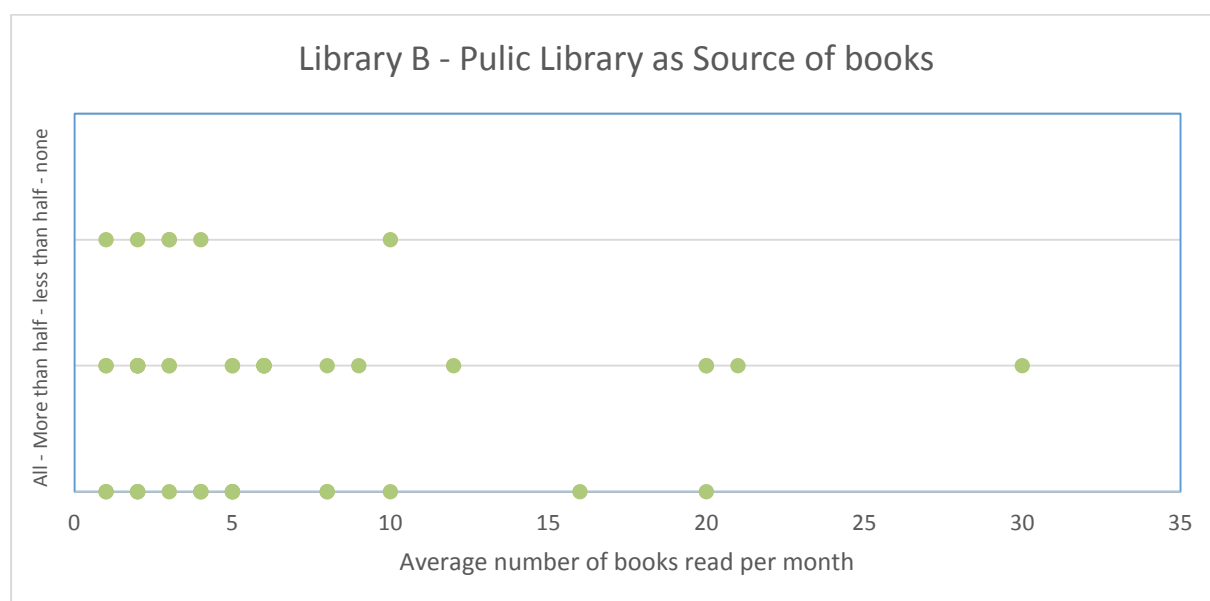


Figure 29: Library B - Public Library as source of books N=50

4.6 Volume read and outcomes

As expected, there is a noticeable trend in the results from Library A (see Figure 30) that shows the more books read the more positive the responses to the GLOs. On analysis of the data from Library B the results are more mixed (see Figure 31). The average number of

books read did not show any significant difference in responses to GLOs between those who read a great deal and those who did not. For example, at Library B, those that read an average of just over 20 books per month disagreed with at least three of the GLO statements. The same is not found at Library A, where only those who read five books a month, on average, or less disagreed with any of the GLO statements. This difference in results from each library is unexpected, however, it is a favourable result as it indicates that even those who read less than others are still benefitting from contact with the library.



Figure 30: Library A - Number of books read per month versus GLOs N=50

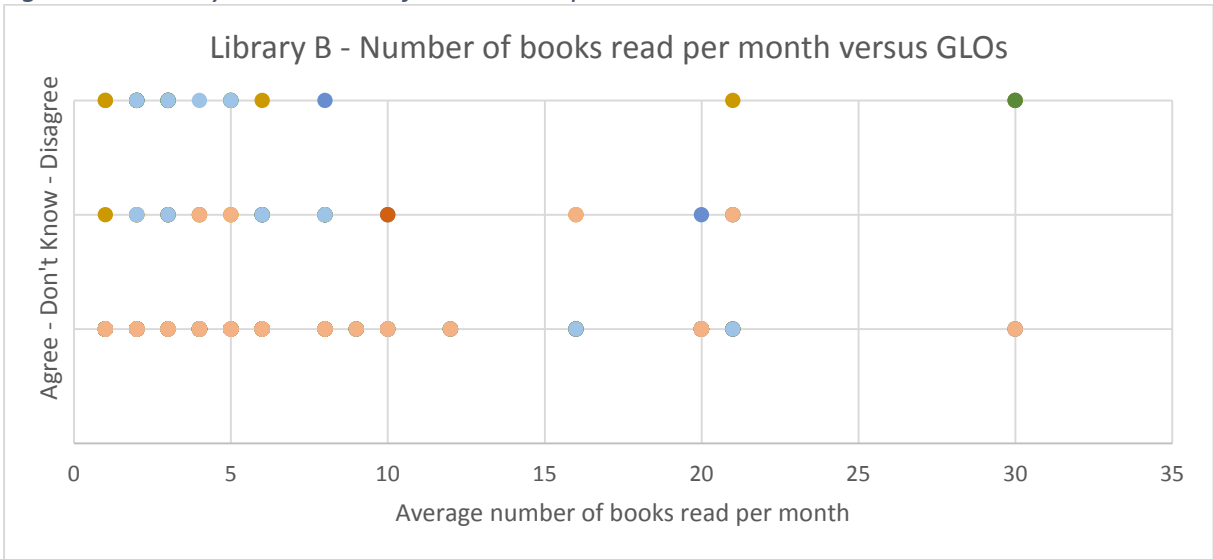


Figure 31: Library B - Number of books read per month versus GLOs N=50

The interviews tend to support the results displayed in Figures 30 and 31 as those interviewed, who mentioned that they did not have many opportunities to read, still described occasions or insights where something they had read influenced them. It is clear from both Figures 30 and 31 that those participants who read more report a greater level of

positive responses, particularly at Library A. This would tend to show that the more one reads the more one benefits.

4.7 Interview Results

In this section I report, in the sequence of questions posed, on findings from the individual interviews. From responses, certain themes or trends can be identified. Of the ten planned interviews, only four could be completed at Library A and five at Library B. The interviewees were participants in the survey who had indicated that they were willing to be interviewed. Many withdrew for a number of reasons when approached to schedule a time.

I conducted interviews in order to obtain more granular detail about the experience of reading that was more difficult to gain from a structured questionnaire as respondents tend to spend little time on open-ended questions (Maree, 2007). The interview results are broken down into thematic elements that help to portray the underpinning research question, viz. the benefit of using the library's print collection. The key point I probed in the interview was to establish if respondents chose the books they read based on a knowledge gap or if the selection was based on chance. Similarly, it was important to assess if they valued the benefits of reading and were aware of the influence that reading can have on their behaviour.

The first question asked the participants for some biographical background. Library A participants all lived or worked within the vicinity of the library. Two were engaged in piecemeal work and two either ran their own business or had run a business previously. Education levels of the interviewees was evenly split between those who had completed high school and those with tertiary education. This was consistent with the demographic of the area, however, highlights the fact that people using the public library, agreeing to be interviewed, tended to be those not in formal employment.

At Library B the interviewees consisted of one student, one part-time employee and three retirees. All but one of the retirees had tertiary education, as did the person employed. This too was consistent with the demographic of the area. In all cases the participants lived further away from the library than those at Library A.

The second question asked the participants what reading means to them. All the participants from Library A reported that reading was important to them and mentioned how it influenced their outlook and improved their knowledge. At least two participants

described reading as a form of escapism and a way to improve their state of mind. All four spoke of learning through reading, in particular, gaining insight into how others may perceive the world.

For the second question at Library B, three of the interviewees described reading as a form of relaxation and escapism while two mentioned gaining knowledge (from fiction as well as non-fiction). So, the responses are similar to those from Library A: that is the consensus was reading is both a way to relax and be entertained as well as a way to learn. When asked how much time was spent reading, and if time was set aside for reading, the following was reported: The majority of the interviewees at Library B set aside time every day to read from between 45 minutes to 4 hours. In one case, reading only took place if the opportunity arose; there was no time set aside for reading.

The trend through all the responses was that there were other demands on the participants time which often limited when they could read. This demand of other leisure activities on people's time was also noted in the survey undertaken by the SABDC in 2016.

Library B interviewees described the time they used for reading in a similar way, with the student complaining that she no longer could devote the time she wanted to reading due to her studies. None of them reported setting aside as much time as those from Library A. Both groups considered it an important enough pastime to set aside time to engage in reading.

When participants were asked about reading interests, I encountered more variety in the responses than in the previous questions. In Library A two of the interviewees mentioned religious or spiritual books being of primary interest, however, they did elaborate that they read a number of novels as well without specifying genre. The other two participants both mentioned Romance novels primarily but also other forms of fiction (Crime or Westerns). In Library B, the responses were as diverse. Three of the interviewees specifically stated that they do not read Romance, all sharing a broad reading interest of mostly fiction with only one mentioning non-fiction (biographies). Religious fiction was one person's preference while none of the others described what they liked, focusing rather on what they choose not to read (as mentioned above). Most of the men interviewed at Library A chose to read Romance novels, as reflected in the representative comments:

Most romantic, romance, uh, books. (Library A interview 1)

The books that I prefer is mostly romantic books, cause I like happy endings when people come together so and crime - crime books and that. (Library A interview 2)

These responses suggest that it was the escapist nature of the books and happy endings that attracted the readers. These comments suggest that the respondents do not subscribe to gender stereotypes that limit the reading of Romance fiction to women. In addition, there was learning reported by the readers of Romance (this is discussed in Section 4.2). Despite the mostly negative image romance fiction enjoys (Adkins, 2006; Pearse, 2015), it has value for these respondents, and others who completed the questionnaire.

The interview responses of all those interviewed described reading as an enjoyable pastime, with most setting aside time to engage in reading.

I use reading to relax. And I use it because I love it when I get a book I can't put down. (Library A interview 1)

It's something that helps me relax. It's fun. Usually if I'm stressing about something I'd rather just sit down and read than have to get up and go do this thing. (Library A interview 2)

Yah...and then I love reading books as sometimes to get knowledge cos as a person who didn't finish school so reading always kept me busy ... (Library B interview 1)

The question about how they choose books to read elicited the same response, namely that browsing the shelves and choosing a book based on the cover and blurb at the back were the preferred methods of the majority of participants from both libraries. Only one person from each library talked about how they looked for books in a specific section of the library. The majority of respondents indicated that a secondary factor guiding their selection was authors they recognised. One respondent from Library B mentioned how she would open the book and consider the quality of the writing before making a choice. Almost all the participants mentioned the difficulty of finding books when confronted by the numbers of books found in a public library. Almost all would seek books on trolleys or 'returned' shelves. These popular methods are both identified by Ooi (2011: 751) and Ross (2009: 649) in their studies of reader behaviour.

The next few interview questions were designed to discover how the content of books read was internalised by the interviewees, starting with their describing a book they had recently read. In Library A, all respondents could relate the content of a book they had read recently. While only two could give the exact title, all could relate relatively detailed information

about the content of the books. Library B's participants had similar responses although more could recall the title and authors more accurately. At Library A, respondents gave less factual information about the books while most of the responses highlighted the emotional responses to the books. The exception was the instance in which a respondent from Library B spoke about a work of non-fiction.

Question 8 asked if the interviewees had ever read something that had changed or influenced how they reacted to a situation or event in their lives. From both libraries the responses were in the affirmative, although the reactions differed. From Library A the explanations of the influence of the books tended towards the practical, for example how to relate to someone with depression or something emotionally or spiritually uplifting. While at Library B, the responses tended towards more abstract effects, for example how a book or author had subtly influenced how they viewed the world. At Library B the third interviewee described how a book had made her look far deeper into events and described the layers of meaning she extracts from the text:

So we don't just have to always look at what is in front of us but what's behind. So whatever happens kind of foreshadows what could happen or... So I feel like...yes, I have learnt to be able to look at things in a much more deeper level or like deeper way of understanding. Wanting to understand or wanting to look at it in a much more ... yes. (Library B interview 3)

The more practical response from a respondent at Library A is reflected in the following statement:

It was actually the crime books. So when I moved to New Horizons [a suburb in Cape Town], I was thinking I want to, I don't want this place to turn out like another Lavender Hill or another Parkwood or a Mitchells Plain where the gangsters and gangs fights is so I decided that I want to be a crime fighter. (Library A interview 3)

The penultimate question queried if any single book read long ago still resonated with the participants in the interviews. The idea behind this question was to assess the potential for long term impact on the individual. All the interviewees were able to respond to this. In most cases the books they described had been read as children. These responses underscore the importance of children developing higher levels of literacy as young as possible. Classics, both modern and older, featured in the responses at both libraries. In Library A, respondents mentioned mostly the Classics, giving examples from Dickens and Shakespeare. One respondent commented as follows

Your Crucible, Lord of the Rings, Waiting for Godot. These are books that really had an impact on my life, you know? And by virtue of attaching myself to those guys, especially Waiting for Godot. (Library A interview 1)

Library B elicited more diverse responses, with titles indicated ranging from Biggles to Nevil Shute:

I'd say Biggles because that was basically mainly the first big book that I read. The more grown up books that I read were the Biggles and it weirdly told me a lot about aviation. Even though I don't use it. Sometimes ... like, oh I read another book and say the person's got the sun in the eyes ... they're high in the sun. Oh this was what they did in World War I to hide from the enemy planes ... (Library B Interview 2)

I remember reading as a teenager a Town like Alice by Nevil Shute and it made me want to travel. I wanted to go to Alice in the middle of Australia and as soon as we had the money we started travelling. And I still remember that book as one of the first ones that had quite an impact on me. It made me want to go and explore Australia and this town called Alice. Although the storyline wasn't about travelling. (Library B interview 4)

In some cases (at both libraries), the participants could not give specifics but spoke in general terms about the impact that reading a certain type of book had on them.

The last question asked if the participants wrote themselves. Many of the interviewees did so or expressed a wish to be able to do so. In Library A, most of those who did not write mentioned how they felt that they did not have the skill to do so. Two had completed unpublished book length works: one a novel, the other autobiographical in nature. Of the Library B participants, four said they were writers, two with the possibility of publishing; the others wrote for more personal reasons, such as keeping a journal. They all spoke about writing as a way to make sense of, or deal with, events in their lives.

Yes, I've written a lot of journals when we've had very tough times when our youngest son was terminally ill. I wrote over a three-year period. And my daughter has actually suggested I publish it, but it's all tucked away. Lots and lots of journals and emotionally it definitely got us through it. So I've always done a lot of writing. (Library B interview 4)

From the interviews, it is clear that people using the library tend to be committed readers who make time to read as part of their daily lives. Compared with the results of the SABDC survey of 2016, these respondents would fall into the 14% of the South African population identified as committed readers, that is those that would read four hours a day if given the opportunity. According to the SABDC definition, the participants in the interviews would be

considered 'heavy readers' based on the time they devote to the pastime (South African Book Development Council, 2016).

From the interviews it was possible to ascertain that participants retain what they have read over a length of time and that some of the books read played a role in their attitudes and behaviour in everyday life. While most reported that the public library was not the only source of books, they confirmed that it did play a significant role in providing reading material.

One of the respondents did purchase a number of e-books and had an extensive library on her Kindle. She had returned to using the library largely due to the public library's curated collection, which helped her choose what to read.

While all the participants report selecting non-fiction to meet an information gap (typically referred to in information literacy studies as triggering an information search) they all read fiction as well, and, in most cases in greater numbers than non-fiction. None of the participants reported selecting fiction with a particular conscious desire to read about a specific subject. In most cases, the selection of a book was based on a spur-of-the-moment choice, dependent on the cover of the book and the style of the writing.

With regard to the benefits of reading, the findings from the interviews supported what was recorded in the questionnaires and did not raise any contradictions.

In Summary the findings from the questionnaire and interviews show a positive correlation between use of the library's print collection and the GLOs. There is a strong link between the volume of books read and these positive outcomes. In addition, the participants who tend to make use of the library, as a primary source of books, showed a great recognition of the benefits of leisure reading. In the next Chapter I will discuss the findings further.

Chapter 5 Discussion of findings

From the results of my cases studies I would like to determine if the results are comparable to those found by other researchers. We know, from prior research, that leisure reading does produce positive outcomes, and this is what the participants reported in my case studies. I will start this section by discussing if the results from my case studies are similar to those found in the studies undertaken by Bray (2007), Moyer (2007) and Ross (2009). The second matter is to determine whether learning has taken place and question if a focus on information literacy has led to underplaying the benefits of leisure reading in public libraries. The last section looks at the practicality of reporting on leisure reading benefits by public library users. The findings could have an influence on collection development and assessment within public libraries in South Africa.

When compared to the results of a 2007, study undertaken in Devon Public Libraries in the United Kingdom (Amosford, 2007; Bray 2007), it is interesting to see that in the United Kingdom study very few participants reported a positive outcome in relation to reading and its influence on changing something they do in their daily lives. In my case studies, far more positive responses to the GLO question were reported.

Almost all the participants mentioned the difficulty of finding books when confronted by the numbers of books found in a public library. Almost all would seek books on trolleys or 'returned' shelves. These constraints are mentioned by Ooi (2011: 751) and Ross (2009: 649) in their studies of reader behaviour. When compared with the results of a similar study in the United States (Moyer 2007) a totally different pattern of reading preference is seen. This shows that public library collections, and their use, are distinctly different from community to community.

One of the findings from the analysis of the questionnaire's open-ended question, and from the interviews, was how long the participants were able to recall something they had read in a book, primarily fiction. In most cases, the participants described books they had read when they were learners or students or books they had read a number of years ago. Ross found in her study (2000a: 74) that thoughts about what was read continue to occupy the reader's mind sometime after the book was read. In Ross's study, and in my sample, some respondents reported that the fiction contributed far more to their world view and understanding while non-fiction was used only to address an issue at hand (for example, to

fix a tap). Those who found meaning in the text could see a connection between the fictional world and their lives. A third of the Ross study participants could identify and articulate one particular (or more) book that had a 'helped' them in their lives, consistent with a similar result in my study.

The methodology typically adopted in information literacy studies, and other methods of assessing learning, are not appropriate for this type of study. The method used to assess if GLO learning has occurred, such as asking the user if they are aware of having learnt something from contact with the library, tends to go against the common perception of information literacy (one of the core reasons for library provision). Information literacy refers to the process in which an individual recognises an information need and then proceeds to complete several steps to meet that need. In applying this to library performance measurement, it is easier to record a positive outcome when the knowledge 'gap' is identified and filled than in the case of leisure reading, where there may not be an identified 'gap'. In the case of leisure reading, it is considered that the information need is not explicitly stated or recognised (Ross, 2000a: 72). This means that, for leisure reading, one needs to define the act of information seeking differently.

5.1 Knowledge gap

It would seem (based on the interviews) that participants tend to base their reading choices on any particular 'need' unless it is an answer to a short-term practical or spiritual need. The choice of book, to read, seems to be an almost *ad hoc* choice with genre being the initial attraction followed by the cover, title and blurb of the book. If a certain author has found favour with the reader, then that author's books will be chosen. This finding was the same at both research sites.

This pattern of choice was found when Ross (2000b) undertook research on readers' choice of books. Ross (2000b) commented on how a number of internalised emotions and moods contributed to the reader's decision about what to read. The same applied to the respondents in my study.

When asked how they go about choosing a book to read for pleasure, most interviewees launched into an elaborate description, involving many interrelated considerations, often starting with their own mood at the time of reading and going on variously to how they find new authors or what clues they look for on the book itself. (Ross, 2000b: 9)

Yet this apparent *ad hoc*, almost random, selection of what book to read seems to not to have had a negative influence on what learning took place as a result of reading a book. All those interviewed were able to recall the content of books read and described how these books had influenced them or taught them something.

Bawden et. al. (2009: 78) summed up a similar situation in their study reporting that library users tended to record or describe their reading experiences in a positive light, identifying a form of learning outcome derived from the book borrowed. Since the entire learning event is 'unplanned' it is unlikely that the library user would be able to identify an unsuccessful reading experience, in terms of knowledge gained. The almost paradoxical nature of this approach means that users will only end up reporting on beneficial interactions with books.

5.2 Reporting on the benefits of reading

While the quantitative survey returned data that allowed me to assess the benefits the participants gained by using the library print collection, it was difficult to understand how the knowledge gained during leisure reading is recalled and applied. The survey results cannot with certainty reveal the type of knowledge gained, since, according to Hooper-Greenhill et. al (2003: 6) the knowledge gained during leisure reading tends to be soft skills linked to emotions, values and beliefs.

I considered it to be an important element of the study to confirm if long-term knowledge gained occurs during this type of reading behaviour. During the interviews I asked questions relating to knowledge gained from reading and its application in daily life. All the interviewees were able to report on this type of experience in their answers, some of which I recorded in Chapter 4, such as:

Things that I didn't know before then I've noticed it it's in the books and then I try it in my life and then I see it works. So I won't say but you know, I can say it, it makes me a better person. (Library A interview 3)

... through the telling of the story of somebody else that is so amazing and where he went wrong and how he went wrong and why he went wrong. For me it's not so much learning as ... I suppose it's the precarious experience of other people's lives. (Library B interview 1)

Okay, so I think for me it's actually like growing and being informed and yes just gaining knowledge and knowing about things and discovering a lot more than what you know. (Library B interview 2)

The difficulty I found – the same issue that many of the other researchers in the field found – (Amosford, 2007; Bray, 2007; Moyer, 2007; Ross, 2009) was that the nature of reading that occurs through contact with the public library tends to be unfocused. This results in the difficulty of relating a specific outcome to the library print collection. The interviewees did report that they learnt from the books they had read; some mentioned books they had taken from the library and, in some cases books they had read as children or from other sources.

What is clear from the interviews, and consistent with reports from the other participants in the study, is that the public library's print collection is a valuable asset. Reading was consistently reported as a way to relax, escape and learn about any number of subjects. An example is:

Well, one is books are a lovely way to escape from the world into another world. They open up one's mind to so much information and knowledge. (Library B interview 1)

While, broadly, the reading act results in a similar type of response from all the interviewees, the exact outcome is dependent on the individual. This would make any prediction of specific impact of the use of a print collection more difficult. The interviewees from Library A seemed more willing, or able, to report on reading events that had impacted their daily lives. Library B interviewees seemed to view the contents of what they had read in a more 'remote' manner.

5.3 Are the acknowledged benefits of reading identifiable?

Is it possible to identify the acknowledged benefits of reading (as listed in Chapter 2) from the results of this study? Some of the outcomes cannot be identified from the quantitative or qualitative data obtained, but several of the findings do show a positive correlation.

While literacy was not directly referred to in the questionnaire or interviews, it is an element that could be inferred from the response to the question about what books people had read and the writing activities that many of the interviewees mentioned. From these responses it would be clear that a relatively high level of literacy had been reached by the participants in the study. This is not something that was specifically tested at any stage of the study, but there is sufficient evidence from the surveys and interviews to support this claim.

Improving their emotional state of mind is an outcome that was most definitely raised in the interview stage of the research, with many the participants mentioning how important reading was to their emotional health. One of the questions in the questionnaire directly asked if reading helped with dealing with feelings and emotions. The positive response was 85% and 77% at Library A and B respectively.

Reading is reported to generate ideas and stimulate creativity. In the questionnaire, this was covered by one of the GLO questions asking if reading had inspired the participants to try something new. The response rate was 92% for Library A and 73% for Library B. During the interviews this thought was not always clearly articulated but can be inferred from activities such as writing that were reported by the interviewees.

From the list of the identified benefits of leisure reading (Chapter 2) the following can be identified, as having been experienced by the participants in my case studies:

- Leisure reading improved their emotional state of mind;
- Leisure reading aided in generating ideas and stimulating creativity;
- Leisure reading helped develop critical thinking;
- Leisure reading aided in personal growth;
- Leisure reading helped shape and store recollection of the past;
- Leisure reading provided a better understanding of human nature;
- Leisure reading enabled them to relive other experiences’;
- Leisure reading provided escapism; and,
- Leisure reading helped to develop sympathy and empathy.

5.4 Summary of findings

The people who participated in the survey and interviews, from both sites, were able to identify and coherently articulate what they had learnt from their leisure reading activities. It would appear that the primary activity that public library users engage in, relative to the library collections, is still leisure reading. There are still a number of gaps in the research that were beyond the scope of this study. One is an examination of the role of the contents of the library's print collection and the other is an examination of the factors underlying the act of choosing what to read and how these two elements contribute to the benefits and impact of the library's print collection. Dempsey (2016) mentions that librarians need to become more aware of how the library fits into the lives of its users. We need to better

understand what role the libraries print collection plays in the users' lives and how collection development can contribute to the benefit experienced from the use of the print collection. The results from this study showed consistently that the print collection, from both libraries, is used extensively as a source of reading material (though not always the sole source).

The limitation of the paper-based questionnaires and sampling methods, while intentionally limited to fifty at each library, resulted in not every library user taking part in the survey. The methodology adopted for this research had a focus on the use of the print collection and no other services offered by the library. With the advent of the internet and online resources, in the public library, it is possible that many of the information needs of the individuals are now met using these resources. In some ways, this elevates the importance of leisure reading since the incidental way that the learning takes place may become increasingly important in light of the how online information is presented.

The findings, primarily from Library A and to a lesser but nevertheless significant extent Library B, show that the insight and knowledge gained from leisure reading was applicable and helpful to those individuals who participated in this research, signalling a positive outcome of using the library's print collection. The public library was identified by the participants in this study, who are considered 'heavy readers', as the primary source for the majority of their reading matter. This finding underscores the importance of the public library as a source of reading material for the public and the role public libraries are playing in the development of a reading culture in South Africa.

Chapter 6 Conclusion and recommendations

It would be wonderful to be able to start this chapter with a declaration of unqualified success for this research, however as with any pioneering research the outcome, is more nuanced. Two questions underpinned the investigation:

1. Are the benefits of leisure reading measurable and quantifiable?
2. Can the public library's role in leisure reading be quantified?

Subsequent questions flow from the two questions above:

1. Is the methodology workable and producing valid results?
2. Are the GLOs the most appropriate tool to quantify the benefits of leisure reading?
3. Do we need to assess libraries' print collections and is impact assessment the method to use?
4. What can public libraries do to take advantage of the unique position they occupy within the South African reading environment?

To start with, I would like to look again at the methodology I employed in this study. While the approach applied the *ISO 16439/14 Standard for assessing the impact of library service*, the scope of this research was limited to one aspect of the library services available. This was by design and not an oversight, but this does mean the results cannot be viewed as an impact study of the entire public library at each site. The print collection cannot be seen in isolation and needs to form part of a bigger 'basket' of evaluation measures, including some form of collection evaluation. Not all print collections are of equivalent size, relevance and quality. In most public libraries, leisure reading selections are made spontaneously by the reader and so the available collection could dictate the potential benefits.

While the methods used to gather the data, questionnaires and interviews are consistent with the ISO 16439/14 standard, it is with the application of the GLOs (Generic Learning Outcomes) to the design of the survey instrument and the analysis of the results that could be considered novel.

The GLOs were developed in the United Kingdom as a means to establish the outcomes and impact of libraries, galleries and museums (Brown, 2007). Brown (2007) explains:

Firstly, none of the GLOs actually measure learning directly, rather they measure indirect factors associated with learning such as whether the experience was enjoyable, inspiring, or interesting. The closest they get to direct measurement of learning is by examining what visitors say about their own learning or the learning of those they were with.

To overcome this gap of the GLOs approach not being designed to measure the learning event directly, I asked participants to relate a specific occasion where contact with a book produced a learning outcome. What does seem to be clear is that the learning experience does not occur equally with every contact with a book; rather reading seems to build up a web of knowledge formed from accumulated contact with books. Previous studies exploring these reported similar results (Ross, 2000; Moyer, 2007; Bray, 2007; Amosford, 2007). The adapted GLOs methodology in this study is not dissimilar to that used by Moyer (2007) and Ross (2000a) in the nature of the questions. It is also clear, both from this study and the works of Dempsey (2016), Coomber and Cormack (1977) and Mar and Oatley (2006) and Ross (2000a), that leisure reading does not occur in a vacuum. It is a dynamic activity influenced by a number of external factors that shape the reader's experience from the choice of book to the interpretation of its contents.

While the methods and approach I used produced reliable and valid results, the questionnaire would benefit from some revision. The questions relating to the GLOs were not specific to books from the library collection. I made an assumption, based on the National survey into the reading and book reading behaviour of adult South Africans (South African Book Development Council, 2016), that the primary source of reading material in most communities would be the public library. It seemed a logical assumption that the library would be able to take credit for the outcome of readers' activities. However, during the interviews, and from the survey results, it became clear that while people used the library as the primary source of reading material, it was not the only source. The interviewees all spoke of sharing books with others, having extensive book collections of their own, or receiving books to read from friends or family. In some cases, these recommended books seemed to produce a stronger outcome than those borrowed from the library. While it was difficult to isolate specific instances of the influence of the library, the study did reveal that it is the primary source of reading matter for more than 80% of the respondents at Library A and 86% at Library B.

Do the GLOs work reliably and with validity to assess the benefit of using the print collection? Yes, with some provisos. Henry (1956) in *Adult reading: the fifty-fifth yearbook of the national society for the study of education* noted that people's interpretation of what they read is dependent on their world view, values, and morals. This finding is supported by Ross (2000a) who found the readers interpret what they read in a uniquely personal manner. This conclusion could be further interpreted to mean that each book could have different effects on each reader and that one could not claim the same benefit for all readers of the same book.

The benefits of leisure reading can be recorded in a quantitative manner, however, the deeper understanding of the impact of leisure reading is best uncovered through interviews. The public library's role is, in this study, limited to the provision of leisure reading material and, while not the only source of books for the participants, it is the primary source. The public library needs to play a more active role in its users' leisure reading activities. During this study it became clear to me that library users tend to limit their choice of reading material by using very few criteria to select books. Public libraries need to consider how they can help users find a book that will prove relevant to them and, hopefully, address a need they may not even be aware of. This conclusion is echoed by Ross (2000b: 9) who wrote:

Being able to choose successfully among materials is an important skill that is never directly taught but is learned by readers who teach themselves, beginning in childhood. Each successful book choice makes it more likely that the beginning reader will want to repeat the pleasurable experience by reading something further.

Is the use of the public library's print collection an aspect of library performance we need to measure? Based on the investment in the print collection it would seem fairly obvious to do so, however, South Africa has a limited track record with respect to documented public library performance evaluation. This is not something a small case study such as this can answer, however, the results suggest that it was a viable approach, as part of a broader impact study. One of the reasons I consider the methodology used in this study more appropriate in the South African context is that we need to move away from value as an evaluation as this measure does not have any real grounding in empirical reality of the users (Bawden et al., 2009). In a community with low income levels and a great need to boost employment the public library's value may be considered far lower (particularly in relation

to the print collection) than in a community with high literacy and food security where reading as a leisure activity is highly valued. Since the impact approach can be applied using recognised criteria of assessment, it may be possible to design a more useful uniform assessment across multiple libraries and communities. An important element of this type of assessment is that the results are community-specific yet relatable since the same criteria are used. What still needs to be addressed is how do public libraries relate to the low levels of functional literacy in South Africa?

While the definition of benefit from the use of the libraries print collections should not be limited to 'learning', it is only due to the difficulty in assessing these other benefits that led me to choose to use the learning experienced as an indicator of a benefit. (Some of the other benefits are improved literacy, psychological well-being, health, relaxation and escapism.) While many benefits were described by library users, interviewed by Hayes and Morris (2005), for their research on the leisure role of libraries, no mention was made of learning. This reinforces the fact that the learning that takes place is almost exclusively unconscious. The assumption that I believe can be made, is that by recording/measuring the one form of benefit (learning) we can draw the assumption that the other recognised benefits of leisure reading are also experienced. ISO 16439/14 (2014: 14) lists impact (or influence) of the library on the individual as (a) changes in skills and competencies (b) changes in attitude and behaviour (c) higher success in research, study, or career, and (d) individual well-being. Impact can be intended or unintended (planned or not) (ISO 16439/14, 2014: 14).

In the case of the use of a library's print collection it would be very difficult to plan the potential impact as individual choice is involved in the selection of material to read. We can generalise the potential impact, since the collection is curated, but the final outcome is dependent on the individual. This I feel is supported by the comments made by the participants in the interviews.

The reliability and validity of the results were enhanced by using methods that were successfully used by Bray (2007) in a similar situation. Overwhelmingly, in both the questionnaire and interviews, the results show that the participants in the study reported 'learning' while engaged in leisure reading. The limited scope of this study does not allow for extrapolating the data beyond the research sites. If one does look at the 'bigger' picture and consider these findings alongside the results of the *National survey into the reading and*

book reading behaviour of adult South Africans 2016 (South African Book Development Council, 2016), it would seem that the sample for this study would form part of the 14% of South Africa's population that are considered 'bookworms' (South African Book Development Council, 2016). Yet of the 14 %, only 24% sourced books from libraries (South African Book Development Council, 2016). This is a worrying trend for public libraries and needs to be addressed.

McQuillan and Au (2001) found evidence in a number of studies that physical access to print does have an impact on reading achievement. While the assumption has been made that the presence of the public library will have the same impact, it has proved difficult to test this. People will benefit if we provide the right books because, if we are providing the right books people will read. Both the libraries used as research sites for this study faced accessibility problems, as far as the users were concerned. Opening hours and safety concerns impacted on the number of people using the libraries. Other factors precluded people from joining the library and taking out books. As one of the interviewees put it, the use of the library's print collection is dependent on the community around the library:

But over the last three years sitting in this library – I cannot speak for any other library – but I was quite amazed to see that people are reading. I mean, the proof, the evidence exists. If you open any book here you will see the stamps consequently moving. But if you go to Lotus River Library, take out a book, it's never been taken out. You understand?

So there's pockets in our community where there are the readers group, ardent readers loving ... love to read, but in ... I mean ... it's just the two libraries that I'm just ... (Library A interview 2)

Returning to impact assessment of a public library, in relation to this case study, it is clear that the collection cannot be the sole point of assessment. So many other factors in the library environment contribute to the impact on the individual. I would argue that we need to start exploring issues that are interfering with the potential role libraries could play in uplifting individuals and communities. In addition, there are issues relating to low literacy levels that also need to be overcome. Impact assessment is, by its nature, a holistic approach that, while supported by statistical data, is dependent on qualitative insights provided by library users (Markless and Streatfield, personal communication, 2016, June 15).

Reflecting on the findings from my case studies, a few factors stand out. The surveys produced a picture of active library users (at both sites). Almost all the library users who participated are reading many more books on average than most South Africans (South African Book Development Council, 2016). It is safe to say that although my sample represented only a small portion of the population, its results are encouraging. I was surprised that the library was not the primary source of books for a higher percentage of library users, though the result is not discouraging as it shows that households do have books. Reading was considered an important pastime in both communities and people are actively setting time aside for this activity. From my own professional experience, I was not surprised by the distribution of genre preferences; public libraries may need to consider finding methods to make genres more easily identifiable and discoverable.

From the section of the questionnaire relating to the GLO-specific questions, very few negative responses were received. This is not that surprising since, as the participants in the survey form part of the population that values reading for pleasure, they are unlikely to downplay the benefits of reading. What is positive is that the results do show that readers are aware of, and are internalising, what they read, outside of a school or academic setting.

From the open-ended question that queried the responses to a particular book, I was disappointed with the low number of responses. In retrospect, this should not have been unexpected as people do tend to struggle to recall details of a specific book, even when read recently. What was pleasing was the diversity of responses.

During the interviews, the different reading interests of the interviewees were also highlighted. Two points that I consider to be of interest were the fact that some of the men I interviewed at Library A enjoyed Romance fiction largely due to the uplifting story lines. One mentioned how he and his mother would share the books they were reading, which gave them the opportunity to have a shared interest to talk about. The second point is that only in two cases at Library A and one at Library B did the interviewees mention specific information seeking when selecting what they were reading. In one case, at Library A, it was discussed with regards to filling a specific knowledge gap raised during reading other books. In all the cases it was more to do with self-improvement than for a particular practical purpose.

One point I did note was that the student, interviewed at Library B, made no mention of using the library books to assist with her studies. Collectively, the interviewees from Library

B were able to articulate their reading experiences better than those from Library A. This may simply be as a result of education and language since the importance and value of reading was clearly apparent across both groups.

Three elements were evident in all the interviews. The first related to choosing what to read. For all interviewed, it was critically important to the learning process. Even when the information need was not overtly stated or recognised, books were selected based on a need, be it emotional or informational. The selection of fiction was almost exclusively based on the genre, cover and blurb, with the author of secondary importance. One factor that did limit the selection of new or different authors and books was the difficulty library users faced when confronted with the library collection. The need for guidance and more specific signposting was mentioned by all the interviewees.

Nearly everyone interviewed mentioned books read when they were young as having a lasting influence on them. These included set work books as well as classics. At least two interviewees mentioned supportive teachers or parents who played a role in how they came to enjoy reading. As Ross (2007: 73) pointed out, learning while reading fiction was easier and more enjoyable than traditional learning.

The qualitative nature of the interviews gave a much richer overview of the reading experience and helped give context to the questionnaire results. It is unfortunate that interviews require so much time both to conduct and to analyse.

In closing, this case study has revealed the following to me. Public libraries are only reaching a portion of the 14% of South Africans who are considered 'bookworms'. We still do not have a clear understanding of exactly how people using the public library go about choosing what they read, with the result that we cannot make conclusions about the relevance of the collections and the adequacy of the readers' guidance. At the same time as people do not want to be dictated to, free and unhindered choice is important especially in terms of the unconscious information seeking. These case studies have quantified the benefits of using the libraries' print collections, and the results are positive. What is currently overlooked by public librarians is what needs to go into developing the collection to improve on its potential benefit. Added to this is the need to improve accessibility to these collections.

In South African public libraries, we have still not embraced impact assessment, due largely in part to the difficulty of establishing a uniform method of assessment in South Africa and a distrust of library performance measures by library staff (De Jager and Nassimbeni, 2005:

41). In line with the Transformation Charter (South Africa. Department of Arts and Culture, 2014) we need to systematise the activity and design tools and methods to evaluate public library performance. This small study revealed a number of elements, which I had overlooked previously, that inform user behaviour and interaction with the library's print collection.

Perhaps if we were to start with applying impact assessment to the publics' use of the collection it could be a path to adopting the approach on a broader scale. It has become clear to me that the impact assessment works best when taking a number of elements into account rather than focusing on just one particular service. This case study clarified that at least three other factors influence the potential benefits of the collection, namely accessibility, reader guidance and the composition of the collection. In any future impact assessment of the library's print collection these factors would need to be factored into the study.

One clear trend across all aspects of this study was the importance and value that the participants placed on the library and reading, which was seen as a valuable pastime that contributed to their well-being, their understanding of the world and provided a social connection to others.

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Leisure Reading Survey

I am Janusz Skarzynski, a Masters student from the University of Cape Town. I would be most grateful if you could take the time to complete this questionnaire. The subject of this research is the outcome of leisure reading for individuals. Your answers will be treated confidentially. There are no right or wrong answers. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you do not want to participate, please return the questionnaire to a library staff member. You also do not have to answer any questions that make you uncomfortable. The results of this study could help improve the library service by informing libraries on the types of books to stock. Please place your completed questionnaire in the box provided.

Leisure reading is the type of reading that a person does for no other reason than they want to. It is a voluntary activity and not required for study or school and can be fiction (novels) or non-fiction.

Questions

Please tick or mark the appropriate box:

1. I find reading an enjoyable part of my life ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree 2. On Average how many books do you read in a month?
3. What Year were you born? 19
4. Do you discuss the books you read with other people? Yes ☐ No ☐
5. What types of books do you like please tick the response next to each that is closest to your opinion i.e. Love, OK or Do Not Read

	Love	OK	Do Not Read
Romance	Love	OK	Do Not Read
Religious fiction	Love	OK	Do Not Read
Historical fiction	Love	OK	Do Not Read
Crime fiction	Love	OK	Do Not Read
Thriller/action fiction	Love	OK	Do Not Read
Fantasy fiction	Love	OK	Do Not Read
Science fiction	Love	OK	Do Not Read
Biographies or Autobiographies	Love	OK	Do Not Read
Health (non-fiction)	Love	OK	Do Not Read
DIY or Home and Garden (non-fiction)	Love	OK	Do Not Read
Inspirational/self-help (non-fiction)	Love	OK	Do Not Read
Other books			
Such as: _____	Love	OK	Do Not Read

6. Please tick the statement that applies to you:

The public library provides me with:

All the books I read ☐

More than half the books I read ☐

Fewer than half the books I read ☐

None of the books I read ☐

Please turn over....

7. Please read the statements below and Tick the comment that is closest to your opinion (i.e. Agree, Do not Know, Disagree)			
	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree
1. Reading has helped me understand why some people behave in a certain way			
2.			
2. Reading has made me change the way I do something in daily life			
3. Reading has given me a better understanding of people who are different from me (follow a different religion, culture or race)			
4. Reading has taught me very little			
5. Reading has improved my communication skills with other people (writing, speaking and listening)			
6. Reading has helped me to better understand what other people are feeling			
7. Reading has inspired me to try something new			
8. Nothing I read in relates to my life			
9. Reading has helped me deal with my emotions and feelings.			
10. Reading has helped me understand problems and solve them			
11. I think that reading has allowed me to better understand historical events			

8. Please name a leisure reading book (a book that you read for no other reason than you wanted to; not for study or school) that has greatly influenced your life. Please elaborate on how this book has impacted your life.

As part of my research, I will be conducting voluntary follow-up interviews where I will ask more question about reading experiences. Please provide an email address and/or telephone number if you would be interested in being interviewed. I would appreciate hearing your views.

Email: _____ Phone number: _____

Interview schedule for: Assessing the impact of a public library's print collection: a case study of two public libraries in Cape Town

The approach used will be general interview-guided approach in order to make sure that specific questions are answered, but that there is flexibility within the questions to draw out information regarding the nature of the learning that potentially took place. I have attempted to limit the number of questions since the interviews will be conducted with members of the public in a public library environment that may not encourage lengthy conversations.

Instructions are in *Italics*.

Introduction:

(Read out the following)

I am Janusz Skarzynski, an M Phil student in the Library and Information Studies Centre, University of Cape Town.

I would like to ask you a few questions about your leisure reading habits. Your answers will be treated confidentially and your identity will not be revealed. There are no right or wrong answers. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You also do not have to answer any questions that make you uncomfortable. You can end the interview at any point.

The purpose of my research is to assess an individual's leisure reading habits to find out what types of books people choose to read and why. Leisure reading is the type of reading that a person does for no other reason than they want to. It is a voluntary activity and not required for study or school and can be fiction (novels) or non-fiction.

The results of this study could help improve the library service by informing libraries on the types of books to stock.

1. Could you please tell me a bit about yourself?
(The aim of this question is to gather some background of the participant and put them at ease)
2. You have agreed to an interview because you have an interest in reading. Can you tell me what reading means to you?
3. About how much of your time do you spend reading?
4. If you did not read what would you do in that time?
(To assess the 'opportunity' cost of reading)
5. Can you describe your reading interests? That is, what types of books do you enjoy reading most?
6. How do you choose the books you read?
(A recognised part of typical learning typologies is the recognition of a gap in knowledge this question may help uncover the participants identifying a knowledge gap.)
7. Could you tell me about a recent book you read?
(This could lead to unstructured questions that would allow for expanding on the book read may allow one to understand if some learning took place and what)
8. Can you think of a time when something you read in a book had impact on how you reacted to a situation you experienced? Can you tell me about it?
(Possibly a point where change in behaviour as a result of reading something in a book. One of the GLOs)
9. Can you think of any book you have read, long ago, that still has some influence on you today? And how long ago did you read it?
(Possible long term retention of information something questioned by critics of GLOs)

10. Do you do any of your own writing? Is it influenced by what you read?
(Possible indication of retention, recording and use information gained)

Thank you for participating. If you would like to be contacted for any follow-up questions or for the results of this study could I please get your contact details.

Informed Consent Form for Interview Participants: Assessing the impact of a public library's print collection: a case study of two public libraries in Cape Town

I am Janusz Skarzynski, an M Phil student in the Library and Information Studies Centre, University of Cape Town. I am currently researching the leisure reading habits of public library users, with a focus on how people may benefit from leisure reading. My research is funded by the National Research Foundation (NRF) and being supervised by Dr Mary Nassimbeni (mary.nassimbeni@uct.ac.za).

I would like to ask you a few questions about your leisure reading habits. Your **answers will be treated confidentially**, and your **identity will not be revealed** at any stage. There are no right or wrong answers. Your **participation in this study is voluntary**. You also do not have to answer any questions that make you uncomfortable. Only with your permission will the interview be recorded. You can end the interview at any point. You will not be penalised if you choose to withdraw, likewise there is no potential for victimisation should you choose to participate.

You will not benefit directly from participating in this study. However the results from the completed study may help inform the public library collection development.

The study conforms to the ethics standards of the Humanities Faculty of the University of Cape Town.

If you have any queries relating to this study please contact me:

Janusz Skarzynski 021 782 2225 or Janusz.skarzynski@capetown.gov.za

Confirmation of Informed consent to be interviewed:

(Please initial at the end of each line if you agree)

I understand the background of this study and have asked any necessary clarifying questions_____

I understand I am participating voluntarily and may withdraw at any point _____

I agree to this interview being recorded _____

I _____ agree to participate in the study described above.

(Signature)_____

Date:_____

Researcher Name:_____

(Signature)_____

Date:_____